Antiquities & Scenery

OF

the North of

SCOTLAND,

in a Series of Letters,

TO

THOMAS PENNANT, Esq.r

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BAMFF.

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MDCCLXXX.

ANTIQUITIES AND SCENERY,

OF

The North of SCOTLAND.

LETTER I.

Banff, May 15th, 1776.

THE antiquities and ſcenery of the North, which you mention as ſuch excellent ſubjects for drawing, every day more and more attract my attention: the point of view in which you place them, as uſeful appendages to your Tours, makes the idea of delineating them yield me an intereſting pleaſure.

I LOOK on it as a fortunate event, that the few of my drawings which made their way to you, ſhould have gained ſo much of your notice, as to occaſion a correſpondence which is ſo flattering and agreeable to me. It is of much importance to thoſe who may command their time, to have their thoughts directed into ſome uſeful channel; and I am very ſenſible how greatly your favours have in this way enlivened my leiſure hours.

I BEG to add the account of this journey, as a Supplement to your Tours; and thus to attempt fulfilling your wiſh, of drawing out of its obſcurity the remoteſt parts of our country. Should I be fortunate enough to execute your commands with approbation, it will doubtleſs be to me a ſpring of much entertainment and pleaſure.

BY this declaration you will eaſily diſcover, that I gladly accept your invitation, and am fond to embrace ſo favourable an opportunity, of paying a general viſit to the more unfrequented parts of the *North:* but at the ſame time muſt add, that I do ſo with the greateſt diffidence of being at all qualified, for executing your orders with any tolerable perſpicuity. I have not however ſpared any pains that could poſſibly give me a chance for enjoying the ramble in a more rational and ſatisfactory manner: and to become acquainted with the *Caledonian* annals, has been an object of my beſt attention.

THE path which you have more particularly preſcribed to me, in that ample field which you have been pervading, appears altogether a romantic, and far from an unpleaſant one. You may depend upon it, that neither reſolution nor perſeverance ſhall be wanting in my endeavours to penetrate into the deepeſt receſſes of the northern mountains: and I truſt to ſend, from the wild environs of *Dornadilla*, ſome authentic repreſentations of the majeſtic ſcenery and ſingular buildings of that remote corner.

THE idea of having an opportunity of examining thoſe ſpecimens of architecture, which are of ſuch high antiquity, gives additional importance to the attempt of making a journey through theſe wilds. And the exiſtence of any carved monu-

mental ſtones ſet up in the early ages of *chriſtianity*, is likewiſe what I ſhall think myſelf ſeriouſly concerned to inveſtigate, though it lead me ever ſo far from the ordinary path of travellers.

THOSE ruins on the way, to which you particularly bend my attention, ſhall be faithfully copied in ſome of their moſt expreſſive views. The neceſſity I ſhall thus be under, of being much converſant with the remains of deſerted temples, and palaces renowned of old, promiſes a fund of ſolemn meditation: and it will greatly dignify my labours, to reflect, that in theſe drawings I ſhall deliver over to you as their preſerver, the moſt venerable and ancient monuments of the nation's former grandeur.

WHATEVER memorable occurs, with reſpect to the ſubjects of any of the drawings, ſhall be communicated with freedom. I propoſe to myſelf no ſmall pleaſure from doing ſo: for I am convinced, that my indulgence in that, will greatly heighten every other entertainment which the jaunt can afford: nor do I expect to find any path ſo deſolate and barren, but what this privilege will enliven and embelliſh.

CONSIDERING myſelf as always in your preſence, holding converſe on the occurrences of the day, I ſhall be inſpired with cloſer obſervation, and more ſteady attention to all the ſubjects of enquiry enjoined me; by which I ſhall endeavour to evince how ſincerely I am

Your's.

LETTER II.

Banff, May 17th.

PERMIT me, before I ſet out on this ramble, to preſent you with a view of *Duff Houſe*, the ſeat of the earl of *Fife*. It certainly has much grandeur in it, and is a piece of very fine architecture; but the general effect will be much more magnificent and pleaſant, when the colonnades and wings are added. A complete plan of the whole may be ſeen in *Wolf*'s *Vitruvius*, according to the original deſign of the late celebrated Mr. *Adams*.

THE incloſed drawing will ſerve to give an idea of the building in its preſent ſtate; but it is hardly poſſible, on ſo ſmall a ſcale, to expreſs the ſumptuous ſtyle of the various enrichments.

FLUTED columns of the *Corinthian* and compoſite orders, ſupport cornices that are adorned with the moſt elaborate and beautiful carvings, and embelliſhed above by ſtatues and vaſes highly ornamented. Theſe on a near view give peculiar elegance to the edifice. The excellence of the workmanſhip becomes the more conſpicuous, the more attentively it is ſurveyed; and the eminent hands employed, contributed not a little to the expence of forty thouſand pounds, which *Duff Houſe* has already coſt.

SINCE you were in this corner, a very large and elegant apartment is opened for a library; a well-proportioned room, of betwixt ſixty and ſeventy feet in length. It is already ſtored with ſome thouſands of choice volumes; amongſt theſe are vaſt collections

tions of portraits of eminent perſons, which prove a ſuitable accompaniment to a cabinet containing an extenſive collection of *Roman* and *Britiſh* coins, medals, &c.

The library extending through the whole breadth of the building, commands from the windows of the one end, a charming proſpect of the ocean, ſea-coaſt, town of *Banff*, and new bridge of ſeven arches thrown over the *Devron*; from the other, a fine extenſive view into the country, and of the pleaſure-grounds along the banks of the river.

It may not be improper to mention, that on a riſing ground on the weſt ſide of the river, a large and maſſy urn, containing bones dug up on the ſpot, with ſingular propriety diſtinguiſhes the conſecrated ground, where formerly were a chapel and burying-place belonging to a monaſtery of *Carmelite* friars. The cells and other buildings belonging to a convent of that order, dedicated to the *Virgin Mary*, encloſed a delicious ſpot of garden-ground, which now forms an excellent orchard.

Not far from the urn, there is a conſiderable mount, of a circular form, which has much the appearance of having been artificially raiſed, and is ſaid to be the effect of penances. It was formerly called *Colenard (Collus Leonardi)* from a ſuperior of the convent, who thence delighted to contemplate the ſurrounding landſcape.

On a hill oppoſite, are ſeveral large ſtone pillars, tending to form a ſemi-circle, and are doubtleſs the remains of a *Druid* temple. The adjacent part of the river is for ſome hundred yards ſeparated into two branches, by an iſland covered with tall trees; in the middle there is an ornamental ſummer-houſe,

ſhaded

ſhaded with their boughs, which makes a moſt agreeable retirement.

A MILE or two up the river, the banks of the *Devron* become lofty, precipitous, and rocky. The hills cloathed with wood, project their very craggy brows perpendicular into the channel. Several paths are effected along the cliffs, amidſt the overhanging trees, which yield from their ſeveral windings variety of romantic ſcenery. Theſe walks terminate at the rocks of *Ava*, immenſe pictureſque precipices, that confine the river into a very narrow channel; betwixt theſe is thrown a very lofty and majeſtic arch, which has a peculiar good effect in ſo wild a ſituation.

I HERE beg leave to introduce a memoir, relative to an inſect attendant on the ſalmon which come up this river, communicated to me by an ingenious friend.

" THE foul ſalmon, of which a drawing has been already ſent " to Mr. *Pennant*, was caught *February* the 10th, 1776. When " brought into the houſe, the colours upon this fiſh were remark- " ably lively. The general appearance was that of a reddiſh " brown; but the ſpots of red and black upon particular parts, " were exceedingly bright and beautiful. When one compared " the whole appearance to that of a clean fiſh, it was wretched " and diſagreeable: it was lank; the belly empty, flabby, and " of a dirty yellow; the jaws at a conſiderable diſtance in the " middle; the under jaw with a large protuberance ſtanding per- " pendicular upon the extremity; the upper jaw with a hole almoſt " quite through (and I am told in ſome quite through) in which, " when the jaws were ſhut, the protuberance lodged. Not one " fin entire; the ſcales and ſkin being in many places deſtroyed,

" preſented

" preſented the appearance of foul ulcers. The gills were full " of the *Lernæa ſalmoneæ*. Such ſalmon are called *Kipper*, or foul " fiſh.

" The cruves in the river *Devron* are (following the windings " of the river) about a mile and a half from the ſea. In the " ſandy places below the cruves, where there is a ſufficient depth " of water, a great many ſalmon ſpawn. In thoſe places they " are ſeen raiſing conſiderable hills of ſand, probably to cover " and protect the ſpawn *. They are likewiſe ſeen frequently " puſhing and ſtriking one another; and the fiſhermen aſſert that " they have many battles: their conjecture is, that the battles " are occaſioned by the males endeavouring to get at the ſpawn " in order to devour it, and the females endeavouring to defend " it. About theſe hills they remain during the winter, and until " the young fry appear, unleſs forced off by a torrent; probably " in order to keep the hills in repair, and to defend the ſpawn " from the many enemies ready to attack it.—*Quære*, Are not " the form of the jaws, the foul ulcers in the ſkin, and the de- " ſtruction of the fins, owing to the above-mentioned operations? " *Quære*, If ſalmon ſpawned in the ſea, would they not be found " more or leſs in the condition of kipper? But in this condi- " tion they are never found out of the rivers."

" LINNÆUS ſays of the LERNÆA *Salmonea, Habitat in branchiis* " *Salmonum*; *ergo etiam marina:* this latter is certainly a miſtake; " for theſe *Lernææ* are never found with us out of the rivers; and " ſeveral ſenſible fiſhermen have aſſured me, that ſalt water proves " abſolute deſtruction to theſe animals.

* *Br. Zool.* III. 4to. ed. p. 252.

" SALMON,

" SALMON at a certain time during their ſtay in the ſea, are " infeſted by another animal of that genus, called by *Linnæus* " MONOCULUS, which is as really a marine, as the other is a freſh- " water animal. This ſpecies * ſeems to me to be undeſcribed " by authors, and very diſtinct from the *M. piſcinus* of *Linnæus*, " which it in ſome meaſure reſembles. In a few hours after a " ſalmon has entered the river, not one of theſe MONOCULI are " to be found upon it. *Quære*, Have we not in theſe *vermes* a " proviſion made by the Author of nature, for forcing the ſalmon " from the ſea into our rivers; and from the rivers back again " into the ſea?

* See plate VI. fig. 1. Should this ſpecies be admitted new, it may not improperly be called MONOCULUS *macrourus*. The figure 2. is LERNÆA *Salmonea*; each above thrice the ſize of life.

LETTER

LETTER III.

Hamlet, near Kildrumy, May 20th.

AS you mentioned that a drawing of *Kildrumy-caſtle*, would be particularly acceptable; it became a principal object of my care: and the other morning, when I ſet out from *Banff*, I fixed on this as my firſt field of enterprize.

THE road through *Strath-ava*, along the banks of the *Devron*, is extremely pleaſant. It runs through fields in a high ſtate of cultivation; the proſpect all the way enriched with ſeats amidſt extenſive plantings. That luxuriancy of country is but little diminiſhed when one advances into *Strath-bogie*. In that long and winding valley, *Huntly* claims chief notice. It is a large and flouriſhing village. The banks of the *Bogie*, on which it ſtands, are enlivened by a linen manufacture, which creates an agreeable ſtir about the place, and tends to encreaſe the number and opulence of the inhabitants.

NEAR the town are the ruins of *Huntly* caſtle. On the avenue that leads to it, are two large ſquare towers, which had defended the gateway. Great part of the caſtle ſeems to be very old, and is nearly demoliſhed; but there is a maſſy building of a more modern date, in which ſome of the apartments, and in particular their curious ceilings, are ſtill preſerved pretty entire. They are painted with a great variety of ſubjects, in ſmall diviſions: a few lines of poetry underneath each, deſcribe the ſubject of the piece. In theſe, the virtues, vices, trades, and pur-

ſuits of mankind, are characterized by emblematical figures, which though not the moſt elegant, are expreſſive. In the chamber, which was appointed for a chapel, or place of worſhip, the parables and other ſacred ſubjects are repreſented in the ſame ſtyle. The whole opens to one a field of various reflection and entertainment, well enough adapted to amuſe a leiſure hour.

A FEW miles diſtant from *Huntly*, in a narrow part of the ſtrath, there is an old building, called *Gartly* caſtle, placed on a ſmall mount, and ſurrounded with a deep ditch. It is a ſquare tower; one end of it is fallen down, and ſhews a ſection of ſtrong vaulted rooms; but there ſeemed nothing ſo ſingular in its ſtructure, as to merit more particular attention.

SOME aged trees decaying around thoſe walls, which they had ſheltered, now render it a romantic object in the landſcape; it was in former years a reſpectable fortreſs. The *Marechal* family built it, to awe the clans in theſe parts; it was of force three or four hundred years ago.

HILL OF NOTH. THE *Hill of Noth*, a moſt majeſtic mountain, bounds the ſtrath on the oppoſite ſide. In general it is brown with moſs and heath, interſperſed with the bare rock, in many places crumbling down. The higheſt part of it is a circular hill, whoſe verdure, as well as height, diſtinguiſhes it from the reſt of the mountain. This is called the *Top of Noth*: and bears the ſtrongeſt reſemblance to every deſcription of a volcanic mount *.

* Tour in *Scotl.* 1772. II. 165. The laſt edition is what I refer to throughout this book.

AT

AT the diſtance of many miles, one can diſtinguiſh thoſe ridges, which are the boundaries of the *crater*, indicating the hollow in the top. I did not go up the mountain; but have with me an account of it, written by a gentleman who examined it with particular care. I ſhall give you the narrative in his own words.

A VOLCANO.

" I had ſeen, ſome years ago, pieces of vitrified, or calcined " ſtone brought from that place. The gentleman who had them " in his poſſeſſion ſaid, that ſome imputed theſe calcinations to " a *volcano*. However, I did not heſitate to pronounce them " ſtones calcined by the burning down of a caſtle, as I had " found ſomething very like them on the caſtle-hill of *Cullen*, " in parts where the ſward of graſs was broken.

" WHEN I reached the top of the hill of *Noth*, and ſaw the " calcinations, I found reaſon to alter my opinion. On the top " of the hill there is an oblong hollow, as I could gueſs, of " about an *Engliſh* acre, covered with a fine ſward of graſs: in " the middle, toward the eaſt end of this hollow, is a large and " deep well. The hollow is ſurrounded on all ſides with a thick " rampart of ſtones. On three ſides, this rampart, from eight " to twelve feet thick, is one compact body of ſtones and mi- " nerals, which have been in a ſtate of fuſion: reſembling a " mixture of ſtone and iron ore, all vitrified, calcined, and in- " corporated. On the north ſide, the rampart conſiſts of bro- " ken pieces of rock, which have the appearance of having been " torn to pieces by ſome extraordinary violence. If the cal- " cined compact wall exiſts under them, it is not at preſent " viſible; and I had not leiſure nor opportunity more particu-

" larly to examine. A perſon whom I converſed with the next " day, who had been alſo on the ſpot, ſuppoſed the wall to have " been the work of art; conſtructed for a retreat to the neigh- " bouring families and their cattle, in times of public danger; " and that the calcinations had been occaſioned by the fires kept " by the people at thoſe ſeaſons. But I have no idea that a wall " of ſuch thickneſs could have been ſo thoroughly vitrified and " calcined by any artificial or incidental fires.

" That men hardly beſet, might climb up with ſome provi- " ſions to it, as a place of refuge, is probable: but that on a bar- " ren mountain-top, far from cultivated ground, half a day's " journey from the plain; that there, in any period of ſociety, men " ſhould have been tempted to build that amazing rampart, is " not to be imagined: they have found it a natural and extenſive " fortreſs, and in critical circumſtances have made uſe of it ac- " cordingly. That it has been occupied as a place of ſtrength " and of refuge is very evident—for, ſome hundred yards down " lower on the hill, there are the remains of another rampart or " wall, conſiſting of looſe ſtones piled together without any ce- " ment, carried quite round the hill. This laſt has been built " for an additional defence to thoſe who made their abode on " the top.

" I avoid an enumeration of theſe ſpecies of fortifications, be- " cauſe Mr. Pennant has already taken ſuch notice of them " as to render unneceſſary every thing which I or any one elſe " could ſay on the ſubject *.

* Tour in *Scotl.* 1772, Part I. 211, 389, and Part II. 157. And Tour in *Wales*, 412.

" The

"THE top of *Noth*, for two-thirds downwards, is covered "with a green ſward; below that it is brown with heath: this "is the very reverſe of the adjacent mountains; and the greater "verdure of the upper part, I imputed to a new ſoil created by "the aſhes of the volcano. The opening called a well, I ſup-"poſe to have been the lateſt crater. About a mile ſouth, down "towards the lower grounds of the *Cabroch*, there is a very "pretty regular green hill, which I aſcribe to a later eruption "than thoſe which may have formed the contiguous hills, now "covered with heath. There is an extraordinary luxuriant "ſpring of water ruſhes out at once from the ſide of the hill "of *Noth*; which is likewiſe ſome confirmation of the opinion, "that a volcano has ſome time exiſted there, which has occa-"ſioned great hollows and reſervoirs of water, in the heart of "the mountain.

"AND the wild irregularities of nature through all the *Cabroch*, "the hideous and ſtrange projection of rocks from the ſides of "the hills, would ſeem to indicate ſome vaſt convulſions which "the earth muſt have ſuffered in thoſe parts."

THE traces of ancient volcanos are far from being unfrequent in *Scotland*. The hill of *Finehaven* * is one inſtance; and not only abundant in this ſpecies of *lava*, but with tarras, or the *pulvis puteolanus*, an *amalgama*, as *Condamine* † calls it, of calcined ſtones mixed with ſcorias and iron-ruſt reduced to powder. The hill of *Beregonium*, near *Dunſtaffage* caſtle, is another, yielding vaſt quantities of pumices or *ſcoria* of different kinds; many of

* Tour in *Scotl.* 1772, Part II. 165.

† Tour in *Italy*, 139.

which

which are of the ſame ſpecies with thoſe of the volcanic *Iceland* *. The noble aſſemblage of baſaltic columns at *Staffa*, thoſe in the iſle of *Skie*, and the rock *Humbla*, are but ſo many evidences of the ancient volcanos of this country †. And finally, the immenſe ſtratum of *pumex vitreus*, or *Icëland* agate, on the hill of *Dun-fuin* in *Arran* ‡, is the laſt proof I ſhall bring in ſupport of the queſtion.

From the foot of *Noth*, is a pleaſant ride along the banks of the *Bogie*. That fertile ſtrath, in former ages, ſent forth many a warrior to battle: *Strath-bogie* alertneſs, ſtrength, and activity, were particularly diſtinguiſhed.

On the right, in the face of a hill, within a few miles of *Kildrumy*, there is a fine quarry of free-ſtone, and one of a hard concrete ſubſtance, uſed principally for mill-ſtones: ſome of theſe, rolled from the quarry at the top of the hill, have come down with ſuch rapidity, that, ſcouring along the plain ground at the foot of the hill, they had ſprung from a neighbouring precipice, over the *Bogie water*, and were lying ſcattered on the oppoſite ſide.

The hills now put on a more bleak and deſolate look: the way over barren heaths began to ſeem tedious; when *Kildrumy* caſtle came in view. Even the diſtant appearance of that noble ruin, diſſipated all ideas of fatigue. On going towards it, acroſs a ſtony moor, paſſed by a well-ſhaped, though rude ſtone obeliſk, ten or eleven feet high; and was directed to ſome un-

* Tour in *Scotl.* Part I. 412. † The ſame, 299, 306.
‡ The ſame, 211.

derground

derground vaults, which have their openings in the ſide of a moſſy bank. The beſt entrance into them was but ſmall, and ſhewed a long dark cavity within. The acceſs was confined and difficult; but on going in I found the receſs to be about eight feet wide, and ſix or ſeven feet high, well built up at the ſides, and covered with vaſt flaggs. ARTIFICIAL CAVES.

ONE may advance twelve or fifteen paces without interruption, and where the paſſage is blocked up, ſeems to be owing rather to rubbiſh having fallen in, than to the deſign of the builders. The others are ſimilar; but whether they have been connected together, and had communication at the ends, cannot now be eaſily diſcovered. They are ſaid to have been numerous and of great extent. They were the retreats of the antient poſſeſſors; ſuch as *Tacitus* informs us were uſed by the *Germans* as a ſhelter, as well from the inclemency of the weather, as from the fury of their enemies *. Thoſe who uſed theſe concealments would, no doubt, have it in their power to block up the entrance with a large ſtone, ſo as to have the appearance of its naturally lying there; and the banks in which they are, give no other evidence of their contents. They would therefore anſwer well for the purpoſes of ſtratagem and retreat.

ON a nearer approach, the appearance of *Kildrumy* becomes ſtill more ſtriking and majeſtic. The ſtyle of the whole building is truly great, equally expreſſive of magnificence and a regard to ſecurity. Its ſtrength ſeems ſuperior to what could have been thought neceſſary before the uſe of cannon; and its KILDRUMY CASTLE.

* De Mor. Germ. c. 16.

grandeur correſponds with the idea of its having been intended for a royal palace.

Placed on an eminence projecting into a deep glen, the buildings occupy the level top of the riſing ground, and, arranged in form of a pentagon, are defended at the angles by very ſtrong and lofty towers: one of theſe, called the *Snow Tower*, is ſtill near fifty yards in height. The court within is ſpacious, and is about the ſize of an acre. A peculiar kind of columns, and vaſt length of windows, indicate where the place of worſhip has been; but the enrichments, and even the form of it, are moſtly loſt, and make, with the reſt of the pile, one common ruin.

All the vaults in one of the towers, are left open in the middle; through heſe paſſed a maſſy chain, ſuſpended at the top, and reaching down to the ground, for the more commodiouſly raiſing water for the uſe of the upper apartments. Some old men, who remember when the chain was taken away, ſay, that there was a deep well underneath.

An underground paſſage, from within the fort, down to the rivulet which runs in the bottom of the glen, is ſtill obſervable.

On looking into it, where the bank is broken up, it had much the appearance of thoſe receſſes in the heath, which I mentioned my having entered; but this ſeemed now altogether inacceſſible. It is ſaid to have been of height ſufficient to allow both men and horſes to go down to the ſtream: ſuch a communication with the water muſt have been of much conſequence during a ſiege.

Many

C.Cordiner del. P.Mazell sc.

KILDRUMY CASTLE.

MANY inſtances occur, which ſhow the former importance of *Kildrumy* caſtle, to be juſtly remarkable in the annals of *Scotland.*

OWING to its peculiar ſtrength and ſituation, it often became a fortunate aſylum to many noble families, who otherwiſe, too often ſhared with their lords the horrors of civil war.

WHEN the forces of king *Robert* were routed at *Methven*, by the earl of *Pembroke*, and the king retreated north with the remainder of his army, the ladies, his relations, crowded to his ſtandard for protection frem the enemy; and for the ſake of that advantage, offered to partake of his fatigues and dangers, and to follow his fortunes however ſevere. But he enjoined them rather to conſult their eaſe and ſafety, by retiring to his caſtle of *Kildrumy*, which he continued to eſteem impregnable, and a place of thorough ſecurity. In 1306, when a ſiege was expected, his wife and daughter eſcaped through the ſubterraneous paſſage, and fled to the ſanctuary of St. *Duthac* at *Taine*; but the earl of *Roſs*, regardleſs of the ſanctity of the place, ſeized and delivered them up to the *Engliſh* *. It was ſoon after beſieged by the earls of *Lancaſter* and *Hereford*. One *Oſburn* treacherouſly burnt the magazines; which deprived the garriſon of proviſions, and obliged it to ſurrender at diſcretion †.

WHEN *Edward* III. wiſhed to have the kingdom of *Scotland* annexed to his crown, and for that purpoſe invaded it, the adherents of *Robert Bruce* defended this fortreſs againſt the enemy,

* Annals of *Scotl.* II. 9. † The ſame, 13.

during their moſt ſucceſsful inroads, and from thence conſiderably harraſſed them.

In 1333, *Kildrumy* was one of the few caſtles which were poſſeſſed by the friends of *Scotland*. It was then held by the venerable *Chriſtiana Bruce*, ſiſter of *Robert* I. and mother of the late owner *Donald Marre*, earl of *Marre*, ſlain the year before at the battle of *Dupplin* *: nor could the *Engliſh* from that time wreſt it out of the hands of the *Scottiſh* loyaliſts.

The earl of *Athol* courted the favour of *Edward*; and deſirous of doing him ſome diſtinguiſhed ſervice, in promoting the deſign of conquering *Scotland*, thought no enterprize better adapted to expreſs his zeal, than that of ſeizing on the caſtle of *Kildrumy*.

Siege in 1335. He inveſted it in *November* 1335, with three thouſand men; but on the appearance of a ſmall army of thoſe who maintained the ſpirit of independence, *Athol* raiſed the ſiege, that he might diſperſe them: on this the garriſon ſallied out on his rear, and he was cut off, with moſt of his followers. From his defeat and death in the field of *Kilblain*, the ſpirit of liberty reanimated *Scotland*. And *Edward* ſecretly ſighed for an honourable opportunity of making peace with a nation, which he found, neither his power nor his policy could ſubdue.

It continued after this the ſeat of the family of *Marre*. In 1360, on a quarrel between *David* II. and *Thomas* the then earl, it was beſieged and taken by the king, who placed a garriſon in it; and *Marre* obtained leave to quit the kingdom; but ſoon regained the royal favor †.

* Annals of *Scotl.* II. 168. † The ſame, 249.

The

THE recollection of that ſad variety of fate which its poſſeſſors had often experienced, made the ſurvey of that grand and noble ruin much more ſolemn and intereſting.

THIS place fell by marriage * to the noble family of the *Erſkines*, afterwards created earls of *Marre*. It continued to be their principal habitation till the beginning of the preſent century. A lady in the neighbourhood remembers them, and has been at their table in the caſtle. But that earldom being forfeited in the year fifteen, *Kildrumy* was deſerted; and from that time went to ruin.

THE earl of *Fife* has been at much pains to preſerve a chamber in the *Snow Tower*, where his agents might tranſact buſineſs with his tenants in theſe parts. But the irreſiſtible hand of time, and the ſtill increaſing weight of incumbent ruins, render every effort abortive, to preſerve any part of it entire.

PERHAPS the incloſed drawing will more fully expreſs the preſent ſtate, and general ſtyle of the building, than any farther deſcription of it which I could offer.

* *Craufurd's* Peerage, 295, 302.

LETTER IV.

Mar-Lodge, May 23.

VERY deſirous of viewing "the exceedingly romantic "rocks of *Brae-mar**," which you ſo much admired and had celebrated, I advanced among the mountains. The way into the country beyond *Kildrumy* lies through a narrow defile. The road, winding amidſt the rugged precipices of dark and forlorn hills, ſeems gloomy and forbidding: but after a few miles, the proſpect opens into a large extent of well-cultivated fields, ſpreading round the kirk-town and caſtle of *Towie*; and from thence there is a delightful ride along the banks of the *Don*. The road following the windings of the river, continues good for twelve or fifteen miles; and at every turn preſents freſh views of arable lands belonging to ſeats, ſeen amidſt wood in the openings of the glens: and old caſtles appearing on the higher grounds, frequently gave dignity to the landſcape.

On quitting the river, the road becomes broken and craggy, and leads up among hills, the moſt wild and deſolate imaginable: ſome of them ſingularly pictureſque, compoſed of rocks of various forms, almoſt completely bare; others diſtinguiſhable in nothing but their bleak brows, and melancholy ſhades; which overſhadow the few ſpots of verdure to be found in the vales. Saw on one eminence a maſſy tomb, raiſed by the pride of a chieftain, who would not ſleep with the vulgar; nor let it

* Tour 1769, 123.

be

be in the power of his vaſſals to put a foot on the earth that covered him.

On aſcending a high and ſteep hill, and gaining its ſummit, beheld one of thoſe aſtoniſhing *Alpine* ſcenes, whoſe greatneſs ſo wonderfully fills the mind. The proſpect immediately below was a wide-extended, deep, and dreary valley, a deſert moor, ſpread with dark brown heath, where verdure ſeemed to be denied; and beyond, a range of mountains the moſt magnificent imaginable: theſe enormous piles ſeemed crowded to the ſky: the clouds that broke upon their tops, and floated down the intermediate ſpaces, gave ſtriking evidence of their immenſe magnitude and various diſtance: their ſhades mingling with the ſhadows of the clouds that hovered round them, made the vaſt cliffs towering above, look over the lower regions of the air in the moſt auguſt and gigantic forms. Theſe conſtitute part of the hilly region of *Brae-mar*.

After deſcending by a rough path of ſome miles into the bottom of the valley, it was with much pleaſure I found the way lead to the banks of the *Dee*. The pleaſing ſcenes of that ſweet tract have been long celebrated in rural ſong. They are indeed extravagantly wild and charming. Here a luxuriant field of waving green, the huſbandman's hope and joy: there the mountain's hoary brow overhanging the dale, ſhagged with parched timber, the remains of conflagrations in the foreſt. On one hand, a hamlet amidſt bloſſoming trees; the chearful cottagers attending their flocks and herds: on the other, towering cliffs, whoſe projecting rocks and lofty pines vie which ſhall claim moſt admiration. The river now ſeen in an opening, gently

gently gliding by rows of willows, ſoftens the ſcene, and reflects the majeſtic landſcape: next minute preſents itſelf an impetuous torrent, daſhing in noiſe and foam down its precipitous and rocky channel.

These noble and chearful proſpects, in alternate ſucceſſion, yield equal entertainment all the way to *Mar-foreſt*. The contraſt is beautifully ſtriking and complete, where "the immenſe "rugged, and broken cliffs, adorned with birch and pine, front, "the fields and gardens about *Invercauld* *."

A little way above the caſtle of *Brae-mar*, there is a ſquare tower upon the top of a rock; the rock on three ſides is waſhed by the caſcades of a rivulet, which falls into the *Dee*. The building is greatly demoliſhed; but is ſaid to have been a fortreſs and hunting-ſeat, at times the reſidence of the kings of *Scotland*.

Over the rivulet there is a good ſtone bridge of one arch, having a machine placed on the ſide, for breaking the ice in winter, that the people may be the more readily ſupplied with water.

A few miles from thence to the right, there is a long, romantic, winding valley, called *Glen-quoich*, bounded by ſloping mountains, whoſe declivities were formerly covered with wood; but in 1695, a ſaw-mill was built at the mouth of the glen; and the timber yearly after, was cut down and ſold, to a great amount: one only now obſerves, amid the higheſt cliffs, thoſe detached trees the workmen could not reach.

* Tour 1769, 127.

The

The reſt of the glen has much the appearance of incorrigible ſterility: yet on more attentive obſervation, thouſands of young pines are ſeen forcing their way through the chinks of the rocks, and riſing amid layers of looſe ſtones and gravel, where one would be apt to imagine, vegetation would be denied. The ſtream that runs through the glen has waſhed the ſoil from among the ſhelvy rocks which conſtitute its channel, and ſometimes found a paſſage under them: here and there the ſhelves, either originally by nature or by the whirl of the current, are perforated through, and down beneath theſe circular openings, the limpid ſtream ſhews a pebbly bottom.

Now and then the oppoſite hills become precipitous, and approach each other very near. The rivulet, in deep caſcades, falls down between the overhanging rocks; and the crags, ſhagged with buſhes, and venerable with the remains of decayed trees, exhibit ſome excellent ſpecimens of romantic landſcape, and great variety of uncommon proſpects.

Four or five miles above *Brae-mar* caſtle, a gothic tower, on the top of a pictureſque rock, called *Craggan*, points out the acceſs into *Dale-more*, through ranges of ſtately trees, which ſkirt the banks of the *Dee*. From the adjacent hill, which commands the full proſpect of that rich valley, the view is exceedingly ſumptuous and delightful. A large and ſpacious plain, finely divided by the windings of the river; enriched with variety of wood; ſurrounded with enormous mountains, the loftieſt pines waving among their craggy cliffs—preſents the moſt ſingular combination of every rural beauty, with the moſt magnificent ſcenery that nature can exhibit.

The river, flowing on in an eaſy ſerpentine courſe, here and there reflecting the pure azure of the ſky, enlivens the deep ſhade of the over-hanging wood, which finely marks its progreſs through the plain. The water ſpreading near the gothic tower, forms ſeveral little iſlands tufted with trees, which give a freſh variety to the ſcene. The incloſures of the dale, marked by various rows of trees; and ornamental clumps of planting, riſing near the houſe and gardens; give the whole valley a charming and very ſplendid appearance. On rugged parts of the hills, a tower, a high obeliſk, an hermitage, a pyramidal ſeat, diſtinguiſh ſeveral eminences, and ſhew works of taſte, mingling with the wilder beauties of uncultivated nature. Diſtant farms, prettily divided by hedges, embelliſh the ſkirts of the mountains, and form a charming contraſt with the dark pines above: the brown heath of the ſummits, the purple bloom of the flower, and grey rocks appearing through; give another pictureſque effect to the landſcape, and ſet off the fainter tints of the blue miſty mountains which terminate the ſcene. In ſuch a beautiful field, and in ſuch a magnificent incloſure, is ſituated *Mar-lodge*, a hunting-ſeat of the earl of *Fife*. It is in the heart of *Mar-foreſt*; an extent of country of about fifteen miles ſquare, reſerved entirely for deer and game, of which it yields the greateſt plenty and variety. The deer being never diſturbed near the ſeat, come about it in great numbers, without ſhewing any marks of fear: advancing from the thickets, they often croſs the green, and ſtop to feed, on the way to their native mountains. The young fawns bounding from the copſe, and accompanied by the hinds, deliberately walk along in view. They are often obſerved on the adjacent heights, reſting

reſting in the heat of the day: and in the evenings march along the ſides of the dale in companies of twenty or thirty together; the ſtags with their branchy horns, and fine ſhapes, are beautiful and entertaining figures in the landſcape.

THE deer that are uſed at table, are killed in diſtant parts of the foreſt, many miles from *Mar-lodge*. Theſe hills abound with partridge, black cock, ptarmigans, and dottrels; and are a rich field of amuſement for the ſportſman; though the ruggedneſs of the grounds makes the recreation to be accompanied with no ſmall fatigue.

THIS foreſt, as you obſerve, was the ſcene of the vaſt huntings of the noble owners the earls of *Mar*. To the droll quotation which you make from the *water poet* *, I beg to add, that they paſſed the whole month of *Auguſt*, and part of that of *September*, in the chace, and every one was dreſſed in an uniform livery.

THE *lin of Dee*, is an object which generally claims the firſt attention of thoſe who viſit *Mar-foreſt*. On the way to it, through ſhadowy walks, along the ſide of the river, a ſaw-mill breaks into the uniformity of the grove, ſeen in the opening of a pleaſant lawn; the workmen buſy among piles of wood; the river ſpreading beneath, and broken in its fall over ſhelvy rocks, which often detain the timber floated down to the mill: theſe objects are an agreeable variety to the general proſpect of the foreſt, and give a more chearful entrance into the dark thicket beyond.

ABOUT three miles above *Mar-lodge*, from a rocky glade, one

* *John Taylor.* See Tour in *Scotl.* 1769. 124.

hears the ſound of the *lin*. It is a noble fall of the river: but the precipices which there confine the *Dee*, approach ſo near each other, that the cataract is ſcarcely obſervable, until within reach of the ſpray, which the fall occaſions: but under the ſhade, and at the foot of a lofty pine, where a ruſtic ſeat is placed for contemplation; the proſpect—of aged trees which hang drooping over the torrent tumbling into the depth below; the loud and continual murmur of the water, ecchoing in the hollow of the worn rocks; the rugged cliffs above, cloathed with gloomy groves of pine; all command a ſerious attention, and render the ſcene intereſting and ſolemn. Vaſt logs of wood, ſeen amidſt the foam of the caſcade, are drove with violence againſt the rocks, and, precipitated from ſuch a height, ſound in their fall like peals of diſtant thunder; and make the ſolitude inſpire additional awe.

A MILE or two farther up *Glen Dee*, a ſingular craggy hill attracts one's notice; it is called *Craig-Phatric*, and is compoſed of broken rocks, which ſeem to be huge ſtones piled on one another, rather than any ſolid maſs. Between two high and pointed cliffs, into which the front of the mount is divided, there appears beyond, as if within its ſummit, a proſpect of precipices with vaſt trees raiſed from amid the naked rocks; from among theſe a rivulet comes down, and ruſhing through the chaſm, forms a white torrent playing from rock to rock all the way to the bottom of the hill. The rugged and deep-worn channel, grown dark with the ſlime of ages, is lighted by the daſhing of the water, and the whiteneſs of the ſpray. At the foot of the fall, which plays down the ſteep for fifty or ſixty yards, there

is

is a rural bridge, compoſed of broken trees and ſods, which leads the way to ſome cottages that are ſheltered by the rock. The peaſants that inhabit them cultivate a meadowy plain, which ſtretches thence to the *Dee*: theſe dwellings, from their very artleſs form, and wicker encloſures, ſcarcely ſeem to diminiſh the wildneſs, but add to the beauty of the landſcape.

FARTHER into the foreſt, and near the ſource of the *Dee*, are many noble glens: deep romantic ſolitudes, encompaſſed with horrid precipices, and where rocky paths lead on the verge of impaſſable ſwamps. In one, a hideous cavern, aweful as ever hermit retired to, yawns over the end of a dreary lake. It chills one's blood to enter it. Leaving *Lui beg*, an opener but rocky dale on the left, ſee a charming valley of meadow-ground, with much fine natural graſs. The ruins of ſeveral ſtone buildings ſhew that it had been once inhabited: but it is now, as the other paſtures of the foreſt, left to fatten the deer. On the ſides of the hills bordering on the valley, are many thouſand ſtumps of trees, the remains of woods which have been floated down *Lui water* to the *Dee*.

FROM thence, by a narrow path, winding among trees, there is an entrance into a dale called *Derry*, ſingularly wild and pictureſque. In the mouth of it riſes a mount, exactly according to the model of *Tomman-beurich*, only the form a little more varied, by the irregular ſize of the timber which covers it. Within the mount the incloſure of the dale is compleat. Ridges of rocky mountains run along its ſides, and theſe, connected at the further end, form a magnificent boundary to ſome miles of pretty level ground. The ſloping ſides of the dale, have a peculiar

culiar wildneſs in their appearance, owing to the foreſt in theſe parts having in a former age been ſet on fire: many of the ſtatelieſt trees ſtill retaining their bare, white, parched branches, twiſted in an innumerable variety of the ſtrangeſt forms, and contraſted with the heath, are ſtriking objects in that piece of deſolate ſcenery. Numbers of ſmall torrents ruſhing down the rocks, ſome of them precipitated over the cliffs from a vaſt height, are united at the bottom of the dale in one common ſtream, and forming a conſiderable body of water, run in ſerpentine windings, under the ſhade of thoſe trees which the conflagration had ſpared. This ramble has yielded a number of ſketches, which will require leiſure to fill up; and drawings of them ſhall be at your command. In the mean time, you will receive along with this, a view of *Mar-lodge*, and the adjacent grounds, with a proſpect of the neighbouring mountain *.

When travelling through the foreſt, one can ſcarce help being ſtruck with the amazing ſize, and venerable appearance of the more antient trees. Some of them ſtanding in a kind of ſolitary majeſty, on the higher grounds, at a diſtance from the woods: others, which through age and infirmity, have yielded to the winter ſtorm and the ravages of time, are laid along the ground a length of ſeventy feet, and have torn up with their enormous roots, ſuch piles of earth, as look at a diſtance like ruins, and give the foreſt a moſt auguſt and forlorn appearance. Much fine timber is periſhing there: ſome thirteen feet in girth: fallen among rocks and broken grounds, where no carriage can

* Publiſhed in the *Virtuoſo's Muſeum*.

be

be drawn, no art can bring them to the river, but at an expence far exceeding their value: they therefore are left to unnoticed decay. Others, which have ſtill withſtood the ſtorms, have began to moulder in the trunks, and are opened. The foreſters, by fire and other artifices, have enlarged the excavations, and formed ſuch cavities in them, as to yield a ſhelter from the winds and rains, and are uſed as temporary cots. The trees do not ſeem at all injured by being hollowed, but ſpread their branches freſh above, as if no ſuch excavation had been made.

I LONG admired one very noble pine with various tops; it exhibited an uncommon appearance. The branches of prodigious ſize, and moſt irregularly wreathed, ſeemed to bend under their weight of timber: one of them had reached the ground, taken root, and for many years drew nouriſhment from the new ſtock, which alſo reared an additional tree: but either through the encreaſing ſtrength and elaſticity of the parent branch, or looſened by ſome violent agitation of the great ſtem of the tree, the large new roots have been torn from the ſoil, and now hang ſuſpended a great way from the ground, with other branches darting from them.

PART of the woods in *Glen lui*, being fallen into decay, ranges of vaſt trunks of the trees, having long lain along the ground, are immured in moſs: their periſhed leaves and diſſolving branches, ſtrewed round, conſtitute the preſent ſoil, and aiding to corrupt and ſoften the timber, are in a great meaſure turned into one general maſs of vegetable earth. In ſome places, where water has ſtagnated among the fallen trees, the moraſs is complete and inacceſſible; in others, the trunks are ſo compact and firm

as to yield a ſafe and dry path, only now and then the ſpecious heath gives way between the logs. Of ſome trees one end may be dug into peats, the other ſawed off and uſed as good timber.

Some very aged, hollow, perforated trunks; which have not been torn up from the roots, but whoſe ſtems and branches are buried round them; ſtill projecting from the ſoil, and gradually decaying in all the original wildneſs of nature, have ſomething extremely venerable and pictureſque about them. The dark brown furze and grey heath, ſprinkled with leaves of bright green; and decked with the variouſly-coloured and ſhewy berries of the ſmall ſhrubs, which already find their ſoil on the withering timber, make a contraſt, like the hoary greatneſs of declining years, with the ſprightly ſallies of aſpiring youth, not to be paſſed by unadmired: with theſe decaying nature is ſpringing forth in other forms; every trunk is enriched with bloſſoms not its own.

Many of the rocks are covered with a ſubſtance, which is picked off for an ingredient in a crimſon or purple dye.

Much amuſed with the ſcenery of the foreſt, I muſt have tired your patience by attempting the deſcription; but truſt, that the wild features of nature have made ſuch laſting impreſſions on my mind, as ſhall enable me to expreſs them more fully by my pencil.

LETTER

LETTER V.

Bana, May 25th.

I WAS up this morning at the top of a neighbouring hill, where are the veſtiges of ſome ſtrong entrenchments, that had been occupied by the *Cummins* in the fourteenth century, when they had much of their fortunes and honours at ſtake. King *Robert Bruce* had been defeated, and driven to the hills for refuge: he remained there a conſiderable time recruiting his forces, and was again come down to overthrow his opponents, and recover the ſovereignty of *Scotland*. The *Cummins*, determined to make a ſtand, choſe this hill as a place of great ſtrength, and occupied the entrenchments with conſiderable force. The king encamped hard by, in a field ſtill called *Bruce*'s park; it is covered with wood, and in a thicket are ſtill to be ſeen a circular trench and rampart; the *prætorium* where the royal tent was pitched. The day of battle proved deciſive in favour of *Robert*, and began that courſe of victories, whereby he ſecured a hereditary title to the crown of *Scotland* *.

In coming down through theſe hilly regions, ſtopped the firſt night at *Pananach-lodge*; an extenſive building, oppoſite to the ſtrange rocks and paſs of *Bollitir*. There, a mineral well and baths, whoſe virtues have been often experienced, are become much frequented by the infirm. The *lodge*, containing a number

* *Abercromby*'s Mart. Atch. Life of *Robert Bruce*.

of bedchambers, and a ſpacious public room, is fitted up for the accommodation of thoſe who come to take the benefit of the waters. Goat-whey is alſo there obtained in the greateſt perfection.

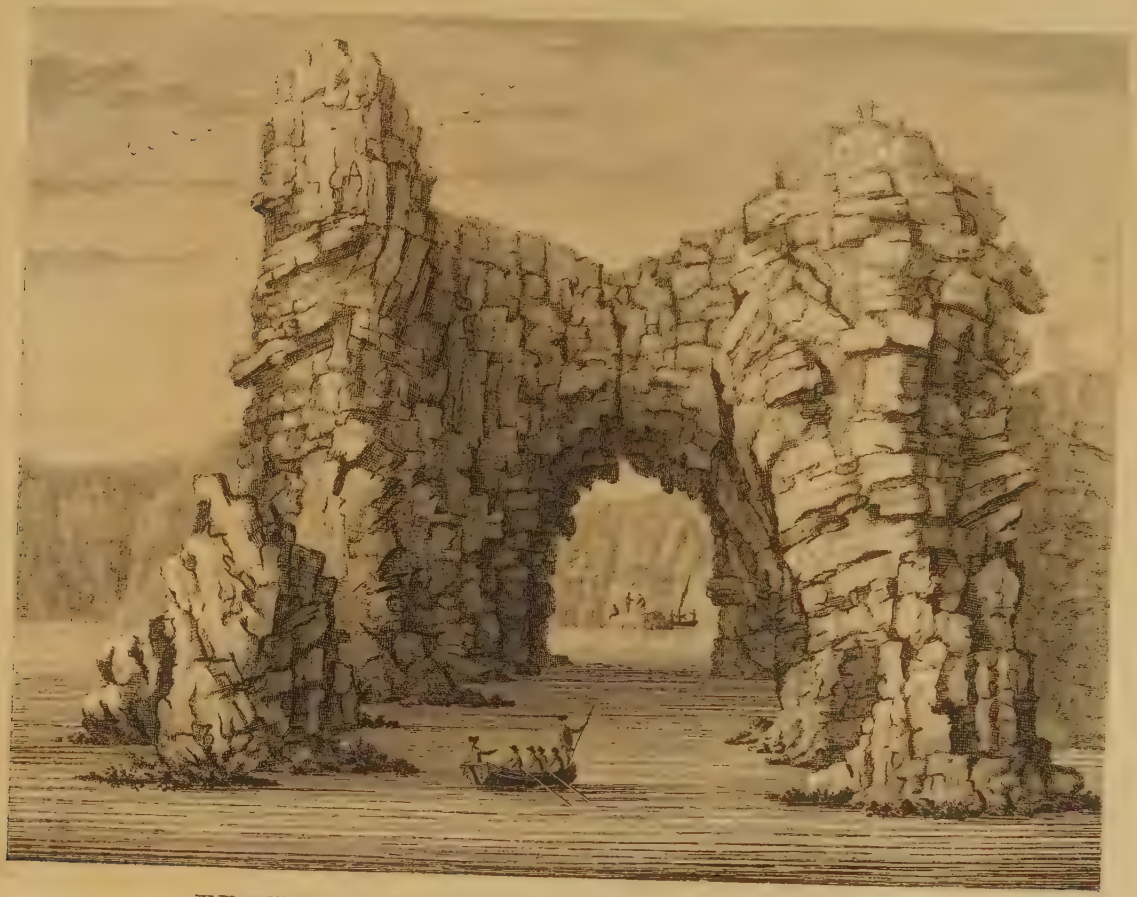
Next day came down to the caſtle of *Dunadeer*: from its eminent ſituation on the top of a high circular hill, it is obſervable at a great diſtance.

Lesly, biſhop of *Roſs*, whoſe hiſtory of *Scotland* was printed at *Rome* in the fifteenth century, ſays that this hill was called *Dun d'ore*, the Golden Mountain, on account of its abounding with gold; that it was owing to this, that the teeth of the ſheep which feed upon it, look as if overlaid with gold; and a large circle of ſtones on the hill, give a brazen ſound*. And the common people have ſtill a tradition current among them, that perſons ſkilled in magic, by performing certain ceremonies at ſun-riſe, will ſee the ſhrubs aſſume the appearance of gold, on thoſe parts of the hill that moſt abound with it. From whence theſe fables derived their origin muſt be uncertain: but as to the laſt, one could eaſily conceive, how the whole ſummit of the mount would have a golden hue, when receiving the warm glow of the morning, before the ſun-beams reached the plain.

The ruins of the caſtle are not great, conſiderable only on account of their antiquity; the fortreſs had conſiſted of a double court of buildings: ſome acres of ground round it are incloſed

* *Leſlæi, Hiſt. Scotiæ*, 29. The biſhop obſerves, that tradition ſaid, the great circle of ſtones had compoſed the temple of an idol:—it may be ſuperfluous to remark, that more probably the ſtones were druidical, and the fable of the ſound they gave, calculated to inſpire votaries with greater awe.

by



FRONT VIEW OF THE BULLERS OF BUCHAN.

by a very maſſy rampart, and wide trench without. It is aſſerted that it was a palace of *Gregory* the Great, and it is near nine hundred years ſince he died. The quiet and ſecurity to be enjoyed, on the ſo ſtrongly fortified top of this ſequeſtered mountain, were inducements which prevailed with *Gregory* to make choice of *Dunadeer* for his place of reſidence, towards the end of his days: and it is accordingly recorded, that he finiſhed his virgin life at his caſtle there*: and was carried thence in pomp to *Iona*, to ſleep on holy ground with the other monarchs who choſe that ſacred iſland for their tomb. CIR. ANN. 892.

WERE theſe more antient caſtles well authenticated, they would, in ſome reſpects, come in the place of medals, and give additional validity to our hiſtories. But I greatly ſuſpect that the preſent ruins are only the reliques of a fortreſs long poſterior to any which *Gregory* might have erected. It is poſſible that he might have founded here a retreat for his latter days. Whoſoever will give themſelves the trouble of comparing the ſtyle of architecture of this caſtle, with that of the abbey of *Deer* (which is well known to have been founded about the year 1218) will be ſatisfied that the architects of each were co-æval.

THE country on the way from *Dunadeer*, preſented variety of well-cultivated lands; but the intermediate hills very rugged and rocky. On ſeveral of the higher grounds, ſaw large ſtones ſet on end; on one or two were ſome rude ſculptures. The *Maiden* ſtone, on the hill of *Benachie*, mentioned by Mr. *Gordon*, is elaborately carved; the ornaments elegantly raiſed; but

* *Boet.* lib. x. p. 213.

though I examined the hieroglyphical figures on it with the utmoſt attention, can make nothing more of them than what is repreſented in the "*Itinerarium Septentrionale*."*.

REMAINS of druidical circles, alſo, frequently attract one's attention on theſe hills, though the uniformity of their appearance, yields but ſmall recompence for encountering the rough ways that lead to them. I will only add one remark, to the many you have made on the ſubject of theſe antient places of worſhip †; that the church of *Benachie* is included in one of them, which is not unfrequent in *Scotland*. This ſeems the effect of choice, not chance, and deſigned by the founders to tempt the Pagan inhabitants to attend on the doctrine of revelation, by building the churches on the ſpots, on which they were wont to celebrate their antient rites. The druidical temples were called in the Erſe *Clachan*; whence to *go to clachan* is, among the highlanders, a common phraſe for *going to church*, to this day ‡.

* *Boet.* lib. xx. p. 162. tab. LIX.
† Tour in *Scotl.* Part I. 43, 205, 412.
‡ Tour in *Scotl.* 1769, 232.

LETTER VI.

Peterhead, May 28th.

FROM *Old-meldrum*, a pretty extenſive village, ſituated on the poſt road from *Aberdeen* northwards, and where the country opens more into a plain, a ride of twenty miles to the coaſt, there is little characteriſtic in the face of the country. A mixture of hills, not lofty, brown with original moſs, makes the verdure of the intervening vallies and cultivated ground appear to the greater advantage. In many places, however, near to old caſtles and gentlemen's ſeats, the ſcenery is both romantic and pleaſant; the banks of the rivers, enriched with wood, precipitous and rocky.

I OPENED the proſpect of the ſea near to *Slains Caſtle*. Next morning roſe with a mildneſs of aſpect peculiarly inviting; and I embraced ſo favorable an opportunity of looking at theſe bold and magnificent ſhores from the ſea. I rejoiced in the tranquillity of the ocean, that allowed me to take ſome ſketches of theſe ſo grand and ſingular rocks. There cannot be a finer entertainment, than to ſail among them in a calm day. I admired the lofty *Dunby*. Many other huge rocks riſe from a vaſt depth of water, and often form labyrinths; in ſteering through which the proſpect is ever beautifully varying.

THE view from the ſea, of the *Bullers of Buchan*, is peculiarly ſtriking; on approaching it, one is preſented with two hideous cliffs; in ſailing between which we fell under the ſhade of an

immenſe and awful precipice, and entered the mouth of the cave. The vault in general, where moſt confined, is thirty or forty feet high; yet is ſo long, that the light conſiderably decreaſes, and the ſtillneſs of the waves, added to the evening-like ſhade, gave much ſolemnity to the ſubterraneous paſſage; but within, the amphitheatre of rock is moſt ſumptuous and ſplendid, not to be beheld without admiration. One ſees an open view of the clouds and heavens, above, ſurrounded with a ſpacious ſweep of ſome hundreds of yards of inacceſſible and often overhanging cliffs. On one hand is a deep and diſmal cavern, in which the ſea runs a great way: on the other, a beach of flat ſtones, under a lofty arch of the projecting rock, where it is uſual for parties who come to view this ſingular retirement to land and regale.

For miles along the coaſt, the ſcenery of rocks continues moſt extravagantly wild, and ſtrange beyond deſcription. We frequently ſailed through and through the cliffs, underneath vaulted pyramids of ſtupendous height. There is encloſed a view of one of the moſt majeſtic arches.

On a lofty promontory, betwixt two immenſe chaſms in the precipice, are the remains of an old building, called *Pſoddom Caſtle*. Some pieces of cannon lying ſunk in the bank without, indicate its having been a fortreſs: its laſt poſſeſſors were of the name of *Keith*, ſome diſtant branch of the *Marechal* family.

From thence, a mile out to ſea, there is a very large rock, called *Crag-foreland*, which riſing gradually to the top, may be climbed up without difficulty. It has neither ſoil nor verdure on it; but ſeveral flats of conſiderable extent, the reſort of various ſea-fowl;

Cordiner dd. *P. Mazell sc*

ARCH near the BULLERS of BUCHAN.

fowl; and from its top an ample proſpect of the cliffs along the coaſt to *Slains Caſtle*; and of the town and harbour of *Peterhead* to the north.

Here the coaſt flattens, and forms a ſpacious bay, in which veſſels of any burden may ride ſecure, except from the eaſterly ſtorms; and as this head-land is a very general rendezvous for ſhipping, exertions are making to extend a great pier into ſuch a depth of water, as to yield a ſafe retreat for veſſels, and cover them from the heavy ſeas, which the ſouth-eaſt winds throw in. Safe and commodious harbours are of mueh conſequence on the eaſt coaſt of *Scotland*, where there are few. This one is capable of vaſt improvement; it has ſingular advantages from nature, which put it in the power of art to make it a port of very general utility to the nation. Being the eaſtmoſt point in *Scotland*, ſhips from *Hudſon's Bay*, *Greenland*, *Norway*, and the *Baltic*, here make the land, and when meeting with contrary winds, anchor in the road; ſometimes a dozen or twenty ſail in a day. To make the protection, which the trade experience here, more complete, part of a very extenſive plan is at preſent executing. A large channel, covered from the eaſt by two iſlands and a chain of rock, is to be deepened, and guarded by piers, ſo that veſſels may get out, either to the ſouth or north, from within the promontory. The preſent port will be twenty feet deep at high water; ſo that it may even admit a ſloop of war. But the funds of this very public-ſpirited undertaking, are by no means equal to the zeal of the managers; unleſs they obtain great aſſiſtance from the public; perhaps, without the aid of government, the deſign can never be rendered complete; they have nearly

exhauſted all their reſources, in the few thouſand pounds which it has already coſt *.

In its preſent ſtate, the harbour will contain forty or fifty ſail; and yields ſafety in twelve feet water.

The great advantage propoſed, by deepening the port, is, that veſſels would float at half-tide, and get through the channel northwards. The number of ſhips continually paſſing and repaſſing, are an amuſing ſpectacle. The offing here was found a rich field of captures for the *French* privateers laſt war; and commodore *Boys* was ſtationed awhile with his ſquadron to diſperſe them.

There are ten or twelve veſſels, from fifty to two hundred tons burden, belonging to the port, which trade to the *Baltic*, *Norway*, *Holland*, *England*, &c. About ten thouſand bolls of victual, corn, malt, and meal, are ſometimes exported hence in a ſeaſon. Manufactures are encreaſing; ſome threads, which have a great character at the *London* market, are made here; an extenſive woollen manufacture is eſtabliſhed of late, and is thought in a flouriſhing way.

They are here ſupplied with the greateſt variety of fiſhes. The cod and ling fiſhing, in particular, employs a number

* "Since the above was written, the gentlemen of the place have drawn out a memorial, and, with the concurrence of the neighbouring members of parliament, had it laid before Lord *North*; and obtained an order from the treaſury for five hundred pounds a year from the annexed eſtates, to be continued ſeven years. This will conſiderably forward the work: And, as it would appear, that the government has it alſo in view to build a fort there, the whole deſign may be ere long completed."

of hands. Beſide what are daily uſed in the town and country, large quantities are dried on the rocks; and ſent to a great diſtance: they are deemed excellent in that ſtate. About five hundred barrels are ſent annually to *London* pickled; and yield from thirty to forty ſhillings the barrel.

A COMPANY have lately fitted out ſome veſſels for the cod and ling fiſhery on the banks off *Barra head*, among the weſtern iſles. This promiſes to be a ſucceſsful undertaking.

THE cargoes of two veſſels ſent laſt ſeaſon, yielded a thouſand pounds. A ſalmon-fiſhery upon the *Ugie*, a ſmall river, which falls into a ſandy bay north of the promontory, in the more favourable ſeaſons will produce five hundred barrels.

ABOUT fifty tons of kelp, near two thouſand pounds value, are annually ſent from hence to *Newcaſtle*; the proceſs of making it, I dare ſay, you are no ſtranger to. The rocks, which are dry at low water, are the beds of great quantities of ſea-weed; which is cut, carried to the beach, and dried: a hollow is dug in the ground three or four feet wide; round its margin are laid a row of ſtones, on which the ſea-weed is placed, and ſet on fire within, and quantities of this fuel being continually heaped upon the circle, there is in the center a perpetual flame; from which a liquid, like melted metal, drops into the hollow beneath: when it is full, as it commonly is ere the cloſe of day, all heterogeneous matter being removed, the kelp is wrought with iron rakes, and brought to an uniform conſiſtence, in a ſtate of fuſion.

WHEN cool, it conſolidates into a heavy, dark-coloured, alkaline ſubſtance; which undergoes in the glaſs-houſes a ſecond vitrification,

vitrification, and aſſumes a perfect tranſparency; the progreſs by which, thus, a parcel of ſea-weed, formerly the ſlimy bed of ſeals, or dreary ſhelter of ſhell-fiſh, is converted into a cryſtal luſtre for an aſſembly-room, or a ſet of glaſſes for his majeſty's table, is a metamorphoſis that might be a ſubject for an entertaining tale.

A MINERAL WELL, in the ſummer-months, gives great gaiety to the place; its ſalutary virtues have been long, I believe juſtly, celebrated. The ſalt-water baths adjoining are much frequented in nervous diſorders: their effect in ſtrengthening the conſtitution is often ſurprizing. Owing to the open peninſulated ſituation, the air of this place is eſteemed peculiarly pure and healthful; even the fogs, riſing from the ſea, are thought to be medicinal: the town is therefore much enlivened by the concourſe of company who frequent it on theſe accounts.

WITHOUT derogating any thing from the merits of the baths and mineral, one may reaſonably conclude, that the cuſtom of walking ſeveral hours before breakfaſt, and meeting the morning breezes from the ſea, along theſe cool and refreſhing ſhores; the probability of meeting with choice of companions, as an inducement to theſe early rambles; the perpetual chearfulneſs indulged by ſociety entirely diſengaged from buſineſs and care, and their various inventions to chaſe away languor; probably contribute no leſs to the health of the company, than the peculiar virtues of the healing ſpring.

LETTER

LETTER VII.

Abbey of Deer, May 29.

A FEW miles inland from *Peterhead*, ſtopped at *Inverugie* caſtle, the antient ſeat of the earl *Marechals* of *Scotland*. It is a large and lofty pile, ſituated on a ſteep bank of the river; two very high round towers bound the front, and in their decaying ſtate, give the caſtle an air of much antiquity and grandeur. Vaſt rows of venerable trees, incloſing the adjoining garden, add to the effect of the decayed buildings.

THIS, Lord *Marechal*'s principal reſidence, ſhared the common fate of the numerous caſtles, and went to ruin, after he left the country, in conſequence of the falſe ſtep taken in the year fifteen.

IT is ſaid one of that family, ſo deeply offended *Buchannan*, that he took revenge, by omitting, as far as poſſible, any account of their martial atchievements in his hiſtory.

CAMUS, the general of the *Danes*, in memory of whoſe defeat the monument at *Panbride* was raiſed, fell by the hand of an anceſtor of the earls *Marechal*: and that event rendered the name of *Keith* no leſs famed and honourable, than the bravery of a *Hay* had done on a ſimilar occaſion.

THE late earl, in his exile, was graciouſly received by the king of *Pruſſia*, and received from him the government of *Neufchatel*; a place that yielded him *otium cum dignitate*, which greatly alleviated the weight of his misfortunes. After conciliating

ating the favour of the crown, through the mediation of his royal patron, he came over and ſpent ſome time in *Scotland:* during his ſtay the king of *Pruſſia* wrote to him.

You will readily pardon my incloſing a copy of his letter, as it ſeems nobly expreſſive of that monarch's ſtyle.

" I cannot allow the *Scotch* the happineſs of poſſeſſing you al-
" together. Had I a fleet, I would make a deſcent on their
" coaſts, and carry you off. The banks of the *Elbe* do not
" admit of theſe equipments; I muſt therefore have recourſe to
" your friendſhip, to bring you to him who eſteems and loves
" you. I loved your brother with my heart and ſoul: I was
" indebted to him for great obligations: this is my right to
" you, this my title.

" I ſpend my time as formerly; only at night I read *Virgil's*
" *Georgics*, and go to my garden in the morning, to make my
" gardener reduce them to practice; he laughs both at *Virgil*
" and me, and thinks us both fools.

" Come to eaſe, to friendſhip, and philoſophy; theſe are
" what, after the buſtle of life, we muſt all have recourſe to."

The earl accordingly returned into *Pruſſia*, where he died, and the line is extinct.

When at *Peterhead*, he ſent his ſecretary to examine the ſtate of *Inverugie* caſtle; but would not go himſelf; probably becauſe it muſt have been diſtreſſing, to have beheld his once ſplendid place of reſidence, now in ſo ruinous, deſolate, and forlorn a ſituation.

A MILE

A MILE or two farther up the *Ugie*, there is a very large old building, with a tower, the walls amazingly thick, and fortified round. In ſome early age it has been a place of ſingular ſtrength: the *Cheyns*, of whom little memorable but the name remains, are ſaid to have been its laſt poſſeſſors.

The ruin, from time immemorial, has been called the *Old-crag*, and *Ravens-caſtle*; names it probably has only obtained in later periods, after it was deſerted and void of inhabitants. It muſt be therefore of conſiderable antiquity; but I could find neither annals nor tradition concerning its founders.

HERE, on a pleaſant bank of the ſame river, ſhaded from the north by a woody hill, lie the remains of an abbey; the form of a croſs, in which it had been built, may ſtill be traced among the ruins. Moſt of the doors and windows have large round arches; but the work has been altogether plain; no veſtiges of carving, nor even mouldings, are diſcoverable on any part.

IN the beginning of the thirteenth century, *Cummin* earl of *Buchan*, dedicated a conſiderable extent of land for the *abbey*; and a body of *Ciſtertian* monks came from *Kinloſs* to the poſſeſſion of it, in the year 1218.

THE laſt *Abbot* of the monaſtery, was of the name of *Keith*, a brother to lord *Marechal*; a man of diſtinguiſhed virtue and good ſenſe: he died at *Paris* in the year 1551 *.

THERE are diſperſed through this country numbers of high ſtones, placed on the riſing grounds; ſome of them would appear to have been originally ſingle, of the monumental kind;

* *Spotiſwood*'s Account of Religious Houſes, 258.

but in general, they have belonged to *Druid-temples*. On the top of one hill, near to the village of *Oldeer*, there is one *Druidical* circle pretty entire; the three ſtones which had compoſed the altar, are of an enormous ſize. Near it are ſeveral veſtiges of cells, which the people call *the Picts houſes*; and may have been the reſidence of the *Druids*.

You have frequently obſerved the ſingle columns, which you know were in uſe to commemorate great events, or the fall of illuſtrious perſons, from the earlieſt times, till they were ſuperſeded by the carved pillars, or by the ornamented croſſes *.

* Tour in *Scotl.* Part I. 172, 203. Part II. 167, 177, 200.

Gardiner pinx. P. Mazell sculp.

ROCKS near TROUP HEAD.

LETTER VIII.

Troup-head, May 31ſt.

I HAVE the pleaſure of writing to you, from this vaſt promontory, charmed with the proſpect of ſuch an extenſive ſweep of bold ſhores, as ſtretch on either hand: in many places the precipices, a hundred yards high, over-hang the ocean; the clouds hovering under their brows. Sometimes the cliffs, diſjointed from the main, aſſume the appearance of ſtately ruins, and maſſy towers riſing out of the deep; ſometimes form into vaſt and rugged amphitheatres, and afford noble pieces of pictureſque ſcenery. In one place, the cape reſts upon a ſhapely circular pillar of vaſt ſize, ſurrounded at the baſe with deep water, its capital ſpreading into an enormous pediment of the overhanging concretions. It yields a moſt magnificent ſcene, to look down from above on the prodigious cliffs, into which the front of the promontory is broken: the airy height of the immenſe rows of ſhelves, where the *kitty-wakes* make their neſts; the dark and hideous caverns underneath, where various ſea-fowl have their unmoleſted abode; the ſtrange forms of the huge rocks and precipices; conſpire to yield the higheſt entertainment to all who can admire the native majeſty of the works of creation.

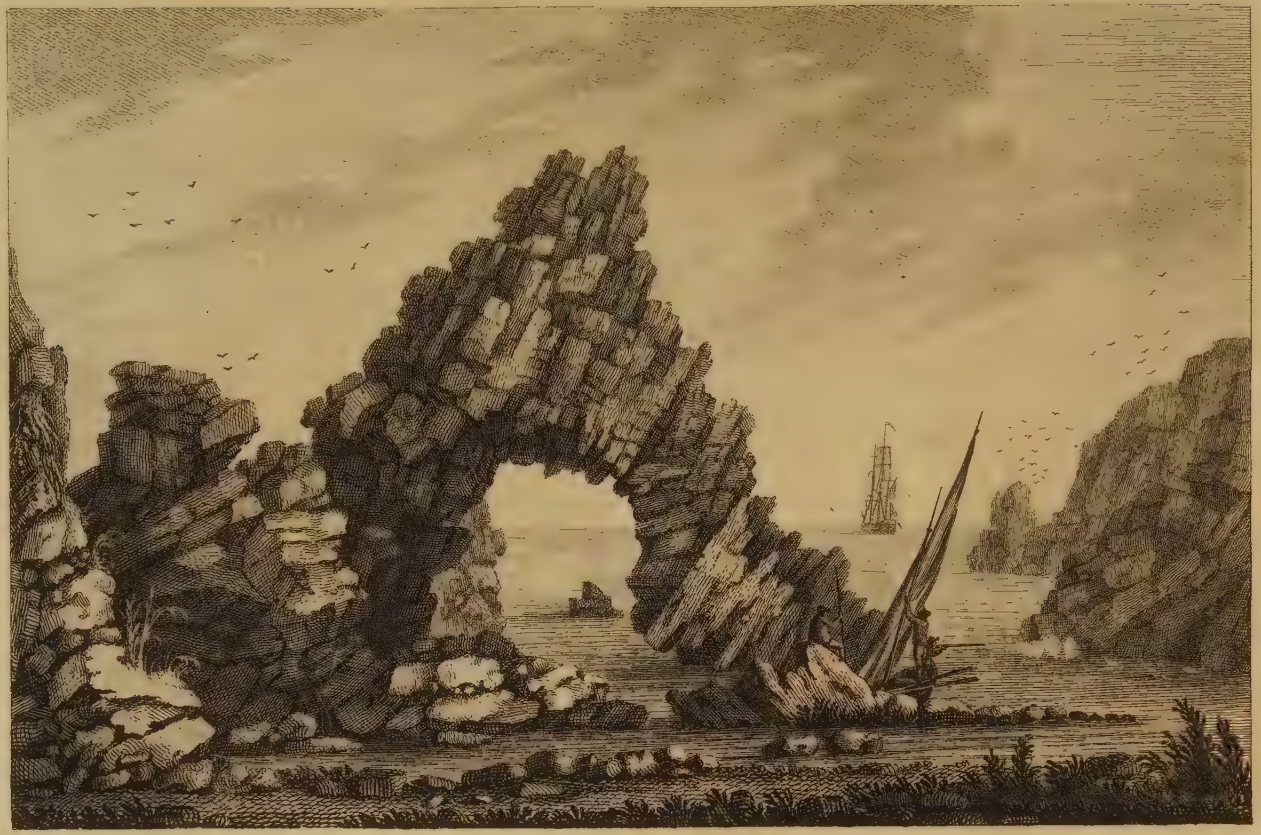
One large vault paſſes compleatly through a point of the promontory. The entrance into it, is but like a rent in the maſs of rock, and leads into a dark and narrow cavern, rugged at firſt, but gradually ſwelling into a fine arched roof, terminates in a moſt

moſt ſpacious dome, open to the ſea. Several other caves on this coaſt run a far way under ground; ſome of them, after winding beneath the rock, return by different paſſages to the ſhore. Theſe are much frequented by ſwallows and rock-pigeons: though ſome of the leaſt acceſſible, are the reſort of *coots*, *ſhags*, and *corvorants*.

Under the cliffs at *Melroſs*, among the lower rocks which project into the ſea, there is a good ſlate quarry, and one at *Pennin*, of a very hard concrete ſubſtance, for mill-ſtones; the paths to theſe, down along the face of the precipices, are the moſt hideous imaginable, not to be attempted but by thoſe who have been early accuſtomed to them.

The creeks in ſome places penetrate much farther into the main than where the ſea flows; and form into deep and rocky glens; where the rivulets, falling from the neighbouring hills, murmur in their deep-worn channels, and exhibit ſome charming caſcades. In the bottom of a ſmall bay, there is one ſingular, broad, perforated pyramid; through which at high water a boat may ſail; and in time of ebb, one may walk on the ſhelves beneath the arch: but I ſhall not attempt to be more particular: the encloſed ſketches will give you an idea of ſome of theſe ſtrange crags.

Yesterday, on leaving the abbey of *Deer*, I came along the ſide of the hill of *Monnan*, not a ſteep, but lofty mountain; it is the firſt land mariners generally diſcover, when coming to this coaſt from the *Baltic*. From it is a delightful proſpect, for a dozen of miles, down to the coaſt, of a fine, champaign, rich corn-country, interſperſed with ſeveral villas. On a moſſy plain



ROCKS near BAMFF.

to the north are ſeveral mounts, formed of looſe ſtones, called the *Carns of Memſie*. Three of them are very large; each meaſuring from ſixty to ſeventy yards in circumference, and from twelve to fifteen feet in height. One of them has been lately cut into the center, but they found neither urns nor ſtone coffins, only ſome human bones, in the ground beneath: many of the ſtones in the heart of the opened carn, have been burned almoſt to vitrification. The ſmaller carns are ſcattered at a diſtance irregularly over the plain; and where incloſures are forming on the heath, yield a ready quarry to the farmers.

Such heaps have not been paſſed unnoticed by you. I avoid repetition, as I would have this work conſidered as merely ſupplemental to your's; therefore refer the reader to your accounts of ſimilar memorials*.

On coming down to the coaſt, five or ſix miles from hence, ſaw, on a high peninſulated rock, the remains of *Dundarg-caſtle*, a place of ſtrength in the fourteenth century. Veſtiges of a large court of buildings may be traced on the top of the rock; but the only part remaining any thing entire, is a ſtrong arched gateway, which had guarded the entrance into the caſtle. Near the neck, which joins it to the main, there is a triple ditch, and ramparts of conſiderable extent; but whether theſe have been outworks, ſtrengthening the fortreſs, or banks thrown up againſt it,

* Tour in *Scotl.* 1769, 153 to 155.—Tour in *Scotl.* 1772, Part I. 206, 208, 209.—Tour in *Scotl.* 1772, Part II. 106.—and the different kinds, very fully, in Tour in *Wales*, from 281 to 288.

may

may not be eaſily determined. *_Buchannan_ mentions its having undergone a ſiege in the year 1334.

HENRY lord *Beaumont* poſſeſſed himſelf, by force of arms, of a large extent of lands in that corner; claimed the title of earl of *Buchan*, and garriſoned *Dundarg* for his chief place of reſidence; and was in that countenanced by *Baliol*, the nominal king.

ALEXANDER *de Moubray*, a man of power, diſputed with *Beaumont* his right to theſe poſſeſſions, and, patronized by *Murray* regent of *Scotland*, came down with a body of forces, and beſieged him in *Dundarg*. *Beaumont*, deſpairing of relief, capitulated, and obtained leave to retire into *England* †.

A FEW miles inland ſaw the ruins of a ſtrongly-vaulted oblong building, called *Wallace-tower*. There is little remarkable about it but the name it bears. Our hiſtorians agree in repreſenting *Wallace* as one of the moſt diſtinguiſhed warriors of the nation; as ſuch, even this rude monument of his fame may be looked on with ſome degree of reſpect. It was in the end of the thirteenth century that *Wallace* was choſen *Protector*, by the ſtates of *Scotland*. He reſcued many of the fortreſſes from the hands of *Edward*'s army, and wiſhed to rekindle the ſpirit of freedom and independence; but notwithſtanding all his efforts, his country found it eligible to ſeek an eaſier path to ſafety, by ſwearing allegiance to the king of *England*. If this tower therefore ever ſheltered that warrior, it muſt be near five hundred years old, and claims ſome notice for its antiquity.

* Lib. 9. † Annals of *Scotl.* II. 174.

LETTER

LETTER IX.

Cullen, June 3d.

A VIEW of *Cullen-houſe* is incloſed, not taken in front, but on purpoſe to exhibit its romantic ſituation on the verge of a rocky precipice; together with the magnificent arch thrown over the entrance of the glen, which opens the communication with the pleaſure-grounds on the oppoſite hill. The glen winds up into the country ſeveral miles, and is full of wood; there are charming walks cut along the ſide of the rivulet; the banks of it often precipitous, pictureſque, and rocky.

In *Cullen-houſe*, the library is elegant and extenſive, enriched with many thouſand volumes, generally of the moſt expenſive and ſplendid order.

On a circular mount oppoſite, are veſtiges of a fort, probably *Daniſh*, which had guarded the landing-place at that corner of the bay. Time has not yet levelled the ſurrounding ramparts, of which there are three rows on the declivity of the hill. Among the rubbiſh of buildings on the top, there is a great deal of burnt ſtones, and vitrified ſtuff, the conſequence of large fires having been made on the ſpot; or, perhaps, the fort in ſome period has been burnt down; for to me it would ſeem highly improbable, that ever an application of fire had been made, to cement buildings, however others may have been amuſed with that theory.

But ſhould any body be diſpoſed in future to make ſuch ex-

periment, I adjoin the moſt approved receipt. The method is ſimple:—" Take a mountain, whoſe ſummit contains a moderate " area, bounded as much as poſſibly with precipices, except at " the place you are to enter. On the brink of theſe preci- " pices place large ſtones, the drier the better, *quant. ſuff.* and " let the interſtices be filled with vitreſcible iron ore; to this " heap make a backing of looſe ſtones, piled careleſsly *behind* " *the ſaid brink*; then build a ſtack of wood *round the whole* " *outſide* of the wall, kindle a fire, and the buſineſs is done *." Should any dull fellow object to the foundation for the backing and fuel, he may be told it is among the *Artes deperditæ*, unleſs preſerved by the academy at *Laputa*, who have the ſecret of condenſing air, and building houſes from the roof down to the foundation †.

You took notice of the thread and linen manufacture at this place. It did not before occur to me to mention a very extenſive one carried on at *Banff*. I was the other day favoured with a paper relative to it, which I doubt not will prove acceptable, as it evinces of how much conſequence theſe are to the country.

" It is *Dutch* flax they chiefly uſe in that manufacture; and " annually import about three thouſand five hundred matts, " which, at an average of £. 3. 5 *s.* each, coſts upwards of " £. 11,000. The flax is beat in water-mills, and then heckled; " that operation employs about ſixty men: when given out to " ſpin, it does not employ leſs than four thouſand individuals; " and yields a hundred and fifty thouſand ſpindles of yarn, which

* *Archæologia*, V. 258. † *Gulliver's* Travels, voy. *Lap.* c. v.

" circulates about £. 10,000 among the ſpinners. The doubling " and twiſting the yarn is done at *Banff*, which employs about " two hundred women and children: and at the bleach-field, " engages the labour and attention of forty people more. Theſe " threads, when ſent to *Nottingham* or *Leiceſter*, where they are " wove into ſtockings, are about £. 30,000 ſterling value."

The good effects of the ſpinning is ſenſibly felt in the neighbouring villages; that ready encouragement given to their induſtry, greatly promotes their diligence; the females are often able, by their wheels, to pay the ſmall rent of their farm, ſo that the labour of the men is appropriated ſolely to the maintenance of the family, which by this means becomes much more amply ſupplied with every neceſſary.

It is with regret the managers of theſe manufactures find that they cannot be ſupplied with flax raiſed at home. The principal obſtacle ſeems to be, the want of hands experienced in the management of it, when taken off the ground; for many, who are ſucceſsful enough in raiſing the moſt promiſing crops, have often the mortification to find them in a great meaſure ruined, ere they can be brought to the heckle.

At *Portſoy* there is a ſimilar manufacture of ſtocking threads, for the *London* and *Nottingham* markets, carried on to a great extent. In ſome ſeaſons three hundred tons of flax are there imported from *Holland*; but *Cullen*, *Huntly*, *Keith*, and other manufacturing villages, are ſupplied thence: that article is therefore an expence of twenty or thirty thouſand pounds a year, to this corner alone, which might be evaded by raiſing flax at home. It is however in ſome degree an equivalent, that victual is exported

to at leaſt as large an amount: in ſome years fifty thouſand bolls, equal to forty thouſand *Engliſh* quarters, of barley, malt, peaſe, &c. are ſhipped from *Portſoy*.

THERE are generally from fifteen to twenty veſſels belonging to the place, from forty to a hundred and fifty tons burden: for ſome of theſe profitable employment is found, at the fiſheries among the *weſtern iſles*; each is equipped with three boats, and requires eighteen hands: they ſail early in the ſpring, about the beginning of *February*, for *Loch-Garloch*; and apply to the cod-fiſhing there until the firſt of *May*, when it is uſual to go to the banks off *Barra head*, where they catch ling. All the fiſh which they take are ſalted and dried on the ſpot: and the veſſels return in *Auguſt*, on purpoſe to ſend their cargoes to the proper markets along with ſalmon. The veſſels which carry theſe to the coaſts of *Spain* and *Portugal*, or up the *Mediterranean*; together with thoſe which have been ſent out with grain; return with wines, ſalt, flax, wood, iron, and whatever other articles are required, either for home conſumption, or thoſe branches of trade in which the inhabitants of the place are engaged.

ON a peninſulated rock, betwixt *Portſoy* and *Cullen*, lie the remains of *Caſtle Findlater*. The top of the rock has been ſo thoroughly covered with buildings, that the outer walls, particularly fronting the ſea, preciſely correſpond with the face of the precipice. Owing to the irregular ſurface of the rock, ſome of the lower rooms are ſo contrived, as to have their inner ends of the ſolid maſs, well cut, and in many places the plaiſtering remains on it entire. The apartments are ſtrongly vaulted above, and have large windows, which look to the ſea; but there ſeems to

to have been little elſe than dead walls on thoſe parts of the rock which are next the neck that joins it to the main. About a hundred yards from the iſthmus, there are conſpicuous veſtiges of a double rampart, which has been drawn round as an outwork to defend the caſtle. Within the rampart are the remains of ſeveral ſtone buildings, probably ſtore-houſes, ſtables, &c. and an area, ample enough for exerciſing many hundred men.

The caſtle was relinquiſhed by the family of *Findlater*, for more commodious and inland ſeats, towards the end of *James* VIth's reign. The dawn of a more auſpicious age, when civil diſcords were ſubſiding, would be ſufficient inducement to the noblemen and chieftains, to chuſe more fertile and pleaſant ſituations, where they could plant, have gardens, and enjoy rural entertainment.

The head-land, which forms on the eaſt the bay of *Cullen*, preſents a noble ſcene towards the ocean, of a lofty, ſmooth, and extenſive precipice; at the foot of the cliff, there is a level beach, compoſed of mouldered ſhells, which are gathering ſoil: but would be a valuable acquiſition to the neighbouring farms, if an eaſy means could be found of raiſing them to the high grounds.

LETTER X.

Forres, June 7th, 1776.

YOUR inſtructions with reſpect to *Forres pillar*, made it an object that demanded my beſt attention. Knowing " * that it far ſurpaſſed, in magnificence and grandeur, the other " obeliſks in *Scotland*," and was ſaid to be " the moſt ſtately " monument of the *Gothic* kind to be ſeen in *Europe* †," and your ſolicitude with reſpect to the authenticity of the ſculptures on it, ſo impreſſed me with an idea of its importance, that I marked the figures with the utmoſt vigilance and care.

MR. GORDON ſays, he diſcovered " ‡ ſeveral of a monſtrous " form, reſembling four-footed beaſts with human heads," &c.; but that muſt have been the conſequence of a curſory obſervation only. There are no monſters on it, except ſo far as the rudeneſs of theſe weather-beaten ſculptures render them ſo. You may rely on the fidelity of the drawing; and I made the following remarks.

THAT in the firſt diviſion, underneath the *Gothic* ornaments at the top, are nine horſes with their riders, marching forth in order: in the next, is a line of warriors on foot, brandiſhing their weapons, and appear to be ſhouting for the battle. The

* Iter Septen. † *Guthrie's* Hiſt. *Scotl.* ‡ Iter Septen. 158.

import

import of the attitudes in the third diviſion very dubious; their expreſſion indefinite.

The figures which form a ſquare in the middle of the column, are pretty complex, but diſtinct: four ſerjeants, with their halberts, guard a canopy, under which are placed ſeveral human heads, which have belonged to the dead bodies piled up at the left of the diviſion: one appears in the character of executioner, ſevering the head from another body; behind him are three trumpeters ſounding their trumpets; and before him two pair of combatants fighting with ſword and target.

A troop of horſe next appears, put to flight by infantry, whoſe firſt line have bows and arrows; the three following, ſwords and targets. In the lowermoſt diviſion now viſible, the horſes ſeem to be ſeized by the victorious party, their riders beheaded, and the head of their chief hung in chains, or placed in a frame; the others being thrown together beſide the dead bodies, under an arched cover.

The greateſt part of the other ſide of the obeliſk, occupied by a ſumptuous croſs, is covered over with an uniform figure elaborately raiſed, and interwoven with great mathematical exactneſs; of this, on account of its ſingularity, there is given a repreſentation at the foot of the column. Under the croſs are two auguſt perſonages, with ſome attendants much obliterated, but evidently in an attitude of reconciliation; and, if the monument was erected in memory of the peace concluded between *Malcolm* and *Canute*, upon the final retreat of the *Danes* *, theſe large figures may repreſent the reconciled monarchs.

* Tour in *Scotl.* 1769, 165.

On

On the edge below the fret-work, are ſome rows of figures joined hand-in-hand, which may alſo imply the new degree of confidence and ſecurity which took place, after the feuds were compoſed, which are characterized on the front of the pillar. But to whatever particular tranſaction it may allude, it can hardly be imagined, that in ſo early an age of the arts in *Scotland*, as it muſt have been raiſed, ſo elaborate a performance would have been undertaken, but in conſequence of an event of the moſt general importance; it is therefore ſurpriſing, that no diſtincter traditions of it arrived at the æra when letters were known.

At *Gordon Caſtle*, the grandeur and elegant finiſhing of the apartments—the variety of pleaſant ſcenery exhibited in the ſurrounding fields, formed, to a vaſt diſtance, into one continued garden—and the ſumptuous proſpects which the caſtle yields from almoſt every point of view—engaged much of that time and attention which I ſhould have beſtowed in more fully finiſhing the encloſed ſketch. No drawing, however, can now be made of *Gordon Caſtle*, that could at all aſcertain its ſtate of antient grandeur. The duke is cauſing it to aſſume ſo much appearance of modern ſplendor, that it ſcarcely bears a diſtant reſemblance to what it was when you ſaw it. Though ſtill in character of a caſtle, it is at once an elegant and majeſtic edifice: it extends upwards of five hundred and fifty feet in front; and the higher parts of the building, towering amidſt the lofty trees in the park, preſent an image of magnificence to all the country round.

In

VII.

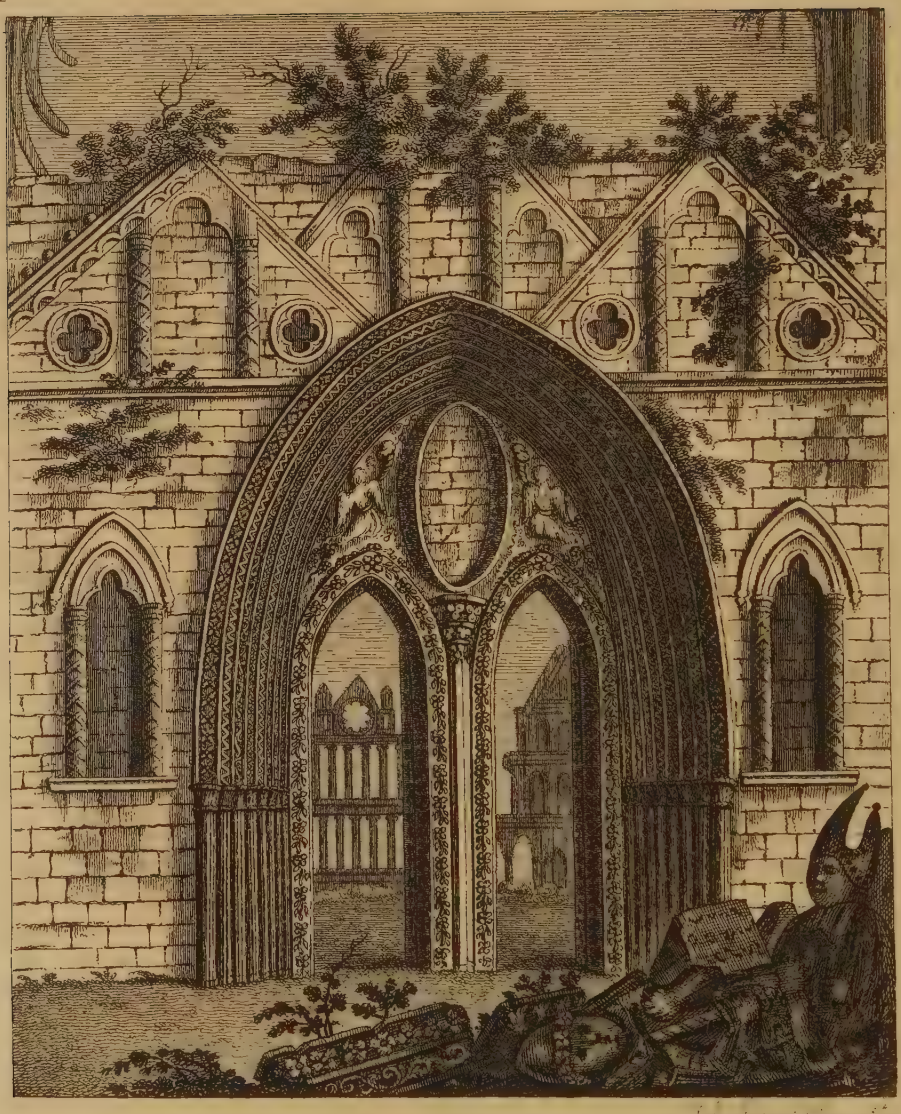
C Cordiner del. P. Mazell sc

GORDON CASTLE.

C.Cordiner pinx

P.Mazell sculp

ELGIN CATHEDRAL.



WEST DOOR OF ELGIN CATHEDRAL.

In *Innes-Houſe*, a ſeat of lord *Fife*, in *Moray*, are ſeveral good pictures; in particular, portraits of the royal line for many ages paſt, to that of his preſent majeſty. *Spinie-caſtle* makes a good viſta to *Innes-houſe*. Its venerable remains ſtill indicate what its grandeur has been whilſt the palace of the biſhops of *Moray*.

I spent much time amid the beautiful and noble ruins of the cathedral of *Elgin*; many parts of that fine building have ſtill the remains of much grandeur and dignity in them. According to your deſire, I have made a delineation of the weſt door; but find the richneſs of theſe ornaments can hardly be expreſſed in a ſmall drawing. It is not enough to ſay, that they are done in very high relief; for often the flowers and foliage are entirely raiſed from the hollow of the mouldings in which they run; and thus, by a moſt elaborate execution, there is given a peculiar elegance of effect to the carvings. Over each entry there is a figure on a pedeſtal encircled with cluſters of grapes, and however unuſual the emblem, ſeems to be an angel on its knee, preſenting a cornucopia, perhaps expreſſing the bounty of Providence tendered for the ſupport of the temple. The remarkable proofs of ſuperior genius and ability diſcloſed in the ornamental parts of that ſtructure, are the leſs to be wondered at, when it is conſidered, that not only almoſt the whole intereſt of this country was, in different ages, engaged in adding to its magnificence; but that alſo, at the Pope's deſire, contributions were raiſed over all *Europe*, and the moſt expert artiſts ſent to complete the work.

THE *Burgh* of *Moray*, a very antient and reſpectable fortreſs, terminates a narrow promontory projecting into the firth, about five miles from *Elgin**. This head-land was, in the end of the tenth or beginning of the eleventh century, fortified by the *Danes*, and of a peninſula made an iſland; and was one of the moſt celebrated places of rendezvous of the *buccaneers* from *Norway*. The vaſt ramparts ſtill remaining, bear the weightieſt teſtimony to its great ſtrength in ſome former ages. An immenſe mound of earth and ſtones ſurrounds the area of the fort, and will be a laſting memorial of the labour beſtowed on making it impregnable. The triple ditch and rampart, which defended the neck, are yet neat and entire. The top had been defended by logs of oak piled on one another. Many pieces are ſtill to be ſeen half burnt, which makes it evident, that this ſtrong hold was deſtroyed by fire. It was a common way of fortification in this province. One *Gilleſcop*, in 1228, burnt ſome wooden caſtles in *Moray* †. This probably was one, which might be poſſeſſed by ſome *Moravian Reguli*, after it was evacuated by the *Danes* in the reign of *Malcolm* II. To this incendiary we owe the burnt appearance; not to any attempt to form round the fort a glaſſy rampart ‡.

THAT rocky point was admirably ſituated for facilitating the depredations of foreign invaders, and ſecuring their ſpoil. It covers a ſafe landing-place in a ſandy bay; and thence excurſions could be eaſily made into the rich plains of *Moray*.

* *Buchanan.* of *Malcolm.* II. † Annals of *Scotl.* I. 149.
‡ *Archæologia*, V. 262.

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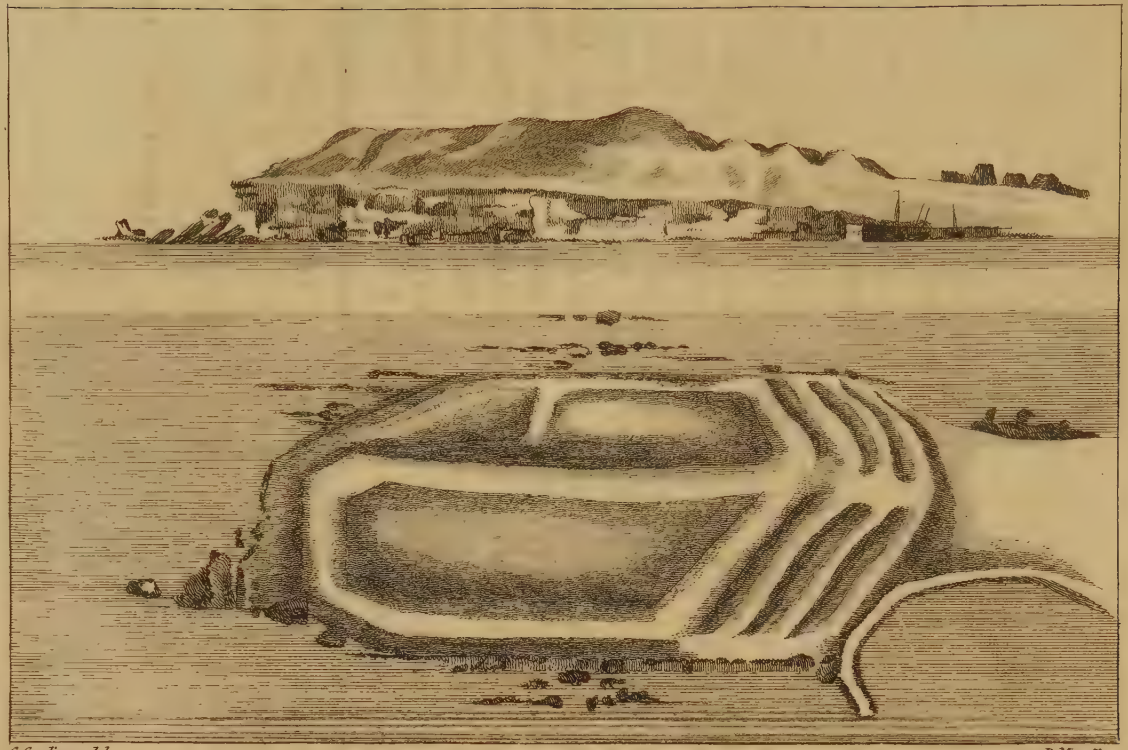


C Cordiner del. P. Mazell sc

BUGH of MORAY.

One place in the fort is marked as a burying-ground, by many moſs-grown grave-ſtones; if there has ever been any ſculpture on them, it is moſtly worn away: on one there is a croſs undefaced, and in good relief; on others there ſeemed to be ſome veſtiges of figures and animals; but their truth too ſuſpicious, to admit of any repreſentation.

At *Findhorn*, I was favoured with the following particulars, relative to the trade of that place.

There are ten or twelve veſſels commonly belonging to the port.

	£.
Caſks are ſent from thence to *Sutherland* and *Caithneſs* for their ſalmon, which are brought over in boats, and are exported, with ſome others, annually to the amount of — — —	8,500
Herrings ſent alſo to *London* and foreign markets,	1,000
Grain, — — —	5,500
Linen yarn, to *Leith*, *Glaſgow*, &c. — —	25,000
So that their annual exports amount to about —	40,000
The goods they require in return, ſuch as ſugars, flour, porter, hops, furniture, *&c.* from *London* alone, amount in a year, to — —	25,000
Coals, iron, ſoap, and other articles, from *Leith*, &c.	3,000
Salt for the fiſheries, — — —	1,500
Flax, and Flax-ſeed, from *Holland*, — —	1,500
Wines, rum, cloaths, lime, and other miſcellaneous articles, — — —	3,000
	34,000

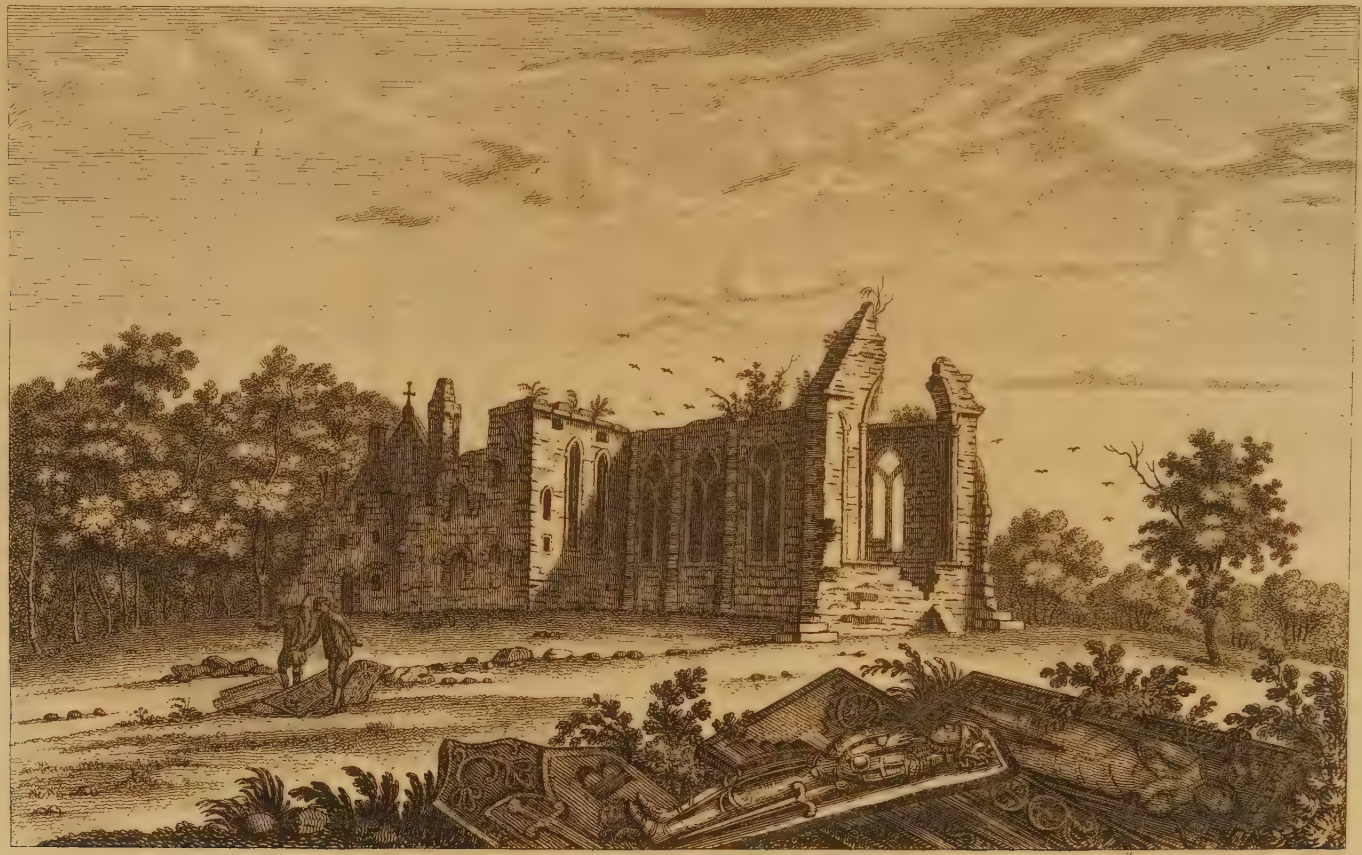
In coming round the bay of *Findhorn* to *Forres*, I found *Kinloſs-abbey* juſt in the way. Some men have been of late employed in clearing the rubbiſh from the ground, near to where the moſt remarkable parts of the building are, and have diſcovered rows of finely fluted pillars, which had ſupported other roofs of great extent: and the fragments of cornices, capitals, *&c.* ſtill digging up, afford freſh evidences of that elegant ſimplicity of taſte wherewith that *Gothic* ſtructure abounds.

This monaſtery, as all thoſe of the *Ciſtertian* order were, was dedicated to the *Virgin Mary:* the place was originally called *Templum florum*; and the ſacred dwellings were reared, in memory of a miraculous blow of flowers, ſaid to have hallowed the grave of *Duffus* *.

† Ascelinus, its firſt abbot, and a body of monks, came from *Melroſs* to the poſſeſſion of it, in the twelfth century, and it went to decay ſoon after the reformation.

* *Dempſter.* † *Spotiſwood*'s Account of Religious Houſes.

LETTER



BEAULIEU ABBEY.

LETTER XI.

Abbey of Beau-lieu, June 10th.

ROUND this ruined monaſtery, at preſent, nothing but rural images invite attention: the venerable boughs of aged trees caſt their ſhade on either hand: within, all is ſilence and deſolation; decaying monuments of ſaints and heroes, are but as "the clouds of other times," and give a tranſient ſolemnity to the recollection of paſt ages. The thought of theſe courts having often echoed with the glad *te deums* of thouſands, who, along with their temple, are now mouldering into duſt, deepens the veneration which theſe hallowed walls inſpire.

THE whole floor of the abbey is crowded with tomb-ſtones of various ages, many of them, I ſhould ſuppoſe, nearly coeval with itſelf, which was built in the thirteenth century. The moſt antient of theſe appear to have been the lids of ſtone coffins; on each is a large croſs, ornamented with various flowerings, ſometimes with ſwords and other emblems at the ſide. And as there is not along with theſe any veſtige of letters, it is a tacit acknowledgment, that writing was little practiſed at the time when theſe monuments were carved: for, as many of them muſt have been cut under the eye, and by the direction of the clergy; and as monaſteries were in this country the firſt ſeats of learning, and where the fine arts were principally ſtudied and encouraged, it muſt place the æra of theſe ſtones at leaſt five hundred years back;—at the ſame time, a degree of neatneſs

neatneſs and elegance, which prevails both in the deſign and execution of the carvings, implies a refinement in taſte and progreſs in the arts at that period, which certainly had much declined in later ages. In the vaults of the abbey, there are ſome remains of bodies found in the ſtone coffins; on the lids of theſe are warriors well carved, and in fine relief; theſe have *Latin* inſcriptions in old characters round the margin, which ſeem to be dated in the fifteenth century; but are in general ſo much defaced, it is impoſſible to copy them.

A FEW of the moſt diſtinct figures on the older grave-ſtones are marked on the foreground of the view of the abbey.

IN paſſing from *Tarnaway* to *Calder*, I rode up through very rugged paths to the brow of the bleak and rocky mountain of *Orchany*, where there is a very antient fortreſs, called *Rate-caſtle*; it was a ſtrong hold of the once-powerful *Cummins*, and commands an extenſive proſpect of all the country, down to the *Moray* firth. It has a circular tower at one end, with *Gothic* windows, and is encloſed at ſome diſtance with thick walls.

IN a burying-ground near the caſtle, on ſome ſtones, the bow and arrow characterize, in ſome degree, the genius of the people, and the age in which they were placed there.

THE mountainous ſcenery round *Inverneſs* is extremely magnificent, pictureſque, and wild. The large expanſe of ſmooth water, which the firth diſcloſes, veſſels gliding along, the old romantic caſtles on its banks, with the vaſt proſpect of hills beyond, yield variety of charming landſcapes.

It is computed, that there are upwards of ſeven thouſand inhabitants in *Inverneſs*. About ſeven years ago, they were particularly enumerated, and found to amount nearly to ſix thouſand; but ſince that time, ſeveral branches of manufactures have been introduced, which muſt have greatly increaſed the number of inhabitants.

The hemp-manufacture alone, employs near eight hundred perſons; ſixty looms are conſtantly employed, in working coarſe cloths for ſails and ſacks. *England* is the principal market for them; but large quantities are alſo exported to the *Weſt Indies*.

They reckon, that two hundred thouſand yards are annually made.

Little more grain is raiſed in the country round *Inverneſs* than is neceſſary for the inhabitants. They meet with one great diſcouragement to their improvements in agriculture, in the ſcarcity of fuel. The moſſes are much worn out; and when coals are brought from the *South-firth*, or from *England*, they burn lime at great expence. The coaſting duty is a heavy obſtacle here to all improvement. The fields in the neighbourhood of the town are, however, well cultivated; and they are very zealous, and at much pains to bring the declivities of the hills into better heart; but they ſeem more deſigned by nature for paſture than for tillage; and the cattle fed on them become one great reſource for the ſupport of the inhabitants. It is computed, that about forty thouſand black cattle are drove from the mountains north of *Inverneſs*, to *England*, in a ſeaſon.

LETTER

LETTER XII.

Dornoch, June 13th.

NEAR the remains of a ruined church at *Dingwal*, obſerved ſeveral more of theſe antient grave-ſtones, with croſſes, and various ornaments on them; ſimilar to thoſe in the abbey of *Beau-lieu*.

THE biſhop of *Oſſory*, when travelling through this country, ſtopped at *Dingwal*, and ſaid he was much ſtruck and pleaſed with its appearance, for the ſituation of it brought *Jeruſalem* to his remembrance; and he pointed out the hill which reſembled *Calvary*.

A FEW miles down from *Invergordon*, towards the coaſt, lie the ruins of the monaſtery of *Ferne:* part of it however has been converted into a church. Amidſt the decayed walls, the tomb of abbot *Ferne* remains pretty entire: the effigy lies at full length, under a richly-ornamented arch, with a long inſcription in old letters, but much defaced. The monaſtery was founded by *Ferquhard*, earl of *Roſs*, in the year 1230, in the reign of *Alexander* II. The monks followed the rule of St. *Auguſtine*, and were of thoſe who, on account of their white garb, received the appellation of *candidus ordo*. *Patrick Hamilton*, an abbot of that place, was among the firſt who ſuffered for favouring the opinions of *Luther:* he was burnt at the gate of St. *Salvator*'s college, in St. *Andrew*'s, in the year 1527.

Monument at Sandwick, Rofs-shire.

THE abbacy of *Ferne* was annexed to the biſhoprick of *Roſs*, in the reign of *James* VI. *anno* 1587 *.

NOT far diſtant from the abbey, a high ſquare column is erected, covered all over with *Saxon* characters, but illegible.

ON a bank near the ſhore, oppoſite to the ruins of a caſtellated houſe, called *Sandwick*, and about three miles eaſt from *Ferne*, a very ſplendid obeliſk is erected, ſurrounded at the baſe with large, well-cut flag-ſtones; formed like ſteps. Both ſides of the column are elaborately covered with various enrichments, in well-finiſhed carved work. The one face preſents a ſumptuous croſs, with a figure of St. *Andrew* on each hand, and ſome uncouth animals and flowerings underneath. The central diviſion on the reverſe, renders it a piece of antiquity well worthy of preſervation: there is exhibited in that ſuch a variety of figures, birds, and animals, as ſeemed what might prove a curious ſubject of inveſtigation; I have therefore given a diſtinct delineation of them, at the foot of the column, on a larger ſcale, that their ſhapes might be diſtinctly aſcertained, and the more probable conjectures formed of their alluſion.

YOU have by no means neglected obſervations on this ſpecies of monuments †; but I beg leave to rectify your miſtake, in confining them to the ſouth of the firth of *Moray*; for you may be aſſured, they are far more numerous to the north.

ON a green plain near the beach, about two miles north from *Sandwick*, under the brow of the hill, on which the ſeat

* *Keith*'s Account of Religious houſes, 245.

† Tour in *Scotl.* 1772. Part II. 166 to 169.

of Mr. *M'Leod*, of *Catbol*, is ſituated; lies another very ſplendid monument, near to the ruins of a chapel, which was in an early age dedicated to the *Virgin Mary*. The proprietor, from a veneration for the conſecrated ground, has encloſed it with ſome rows of trees; and it is well worthy of his care, for the obeliſk is one of the moſt beautiful pieces of antient ſculpture that has ever been diſcovered in *Scotland*. The ſtone is of enormous ſize, and has lain unnoticed on its face from time immemorial, and by that means is in the higheſt ſtate of preſervation. It repreſents the hunting of the deer with hound and horn. The waving ornaments round the margin are airy and elegant, and cut with a maſterly hand. Four ſcepters are introduced in a very conſpicuous manner above, and ſerve as a comment on thoſe that appear, though leſs diſtinctly marked, on the obeliſk at *Aberlemni*.

Mr. *M'Leod*, of *Gueneas*, to whoſe great attention the diſcovery of the above was in a great meaſure owing, conducted me to ſeveral fragments of other obeliſks lying on *Tarbetneſs*, which in all appearance had not been originally inferior to either of theſe that have been ſpecified; but they are ſo ſhattered to pieces that their connection is loſt.

These monuments are all ſaid to have been erected in memory of defeats of the *Danes*; but there does not appear any reference, that the hieroglyphicks on them can have to ſuch events. That they have been raiſed on intereſting occaſions, there can be little doubt; perhaps in memory of the moſt renowned chieftains, and their exploits, who firſt embraced Chriſtianity. They are the moſt antient memorials of its eſtabliſhment: and

if among the firſt expreſſions of public veneration for the croſs, their antiquity may be conſiderable; for the *Keledei*, emiſſaries of the ſacred colleges, *Columba* from *Iona*, and others, had opened a dawn of Chriſtianity upon theſe northern counties in the ſixth century.

To what you have ſaid, permit me to add—it is highly probable, from the indubitable evidence which theſe monuments give of the expertneſs and genius of the artiſts who have been employed in deſigning and carving them, that every figure has had an import of ſome conſequence, at that time underſtood; and what might then from cuſtom be eaſily apprehended, they would not doubt of continuing intelligible to future ages alſo: but had they obtained the knowledge of letters, they certainly would not have had recourſe to a means of perpetuating the memory of events, ſo much leſs perfect.

It was after the invention of the art of making paper, in the eleventh century, that writing came into general uſe, in the north of *Scotland*, even on important occaſions: it was a corner peculiarly remote from the ſeats of learning, and in preceding ages, ill provided with the means of cultivating letters or diffuſing knowledge; it is not therefore ſtrange that the annals of this country, with reſpect to diſtant events, ſhould be involved in a general obſcurity.

There are writs extant, ſigned at *Inverneſs*, &c. in the middle of the eleventh century; though the obeliſks under conſideration muſt have been erected ſome time previous to that age; yet it is perhaps beyond human penetration any farther to aſcertain the period, far leſs to unravel their import. One general obſerva-

tion however occurs—that the genius, art, and application, diſcoverable in the carvings on theſe monuments; the elegance of ſome of the ornaments, the mathematical accuracy of others, and elaborate execution of the whole; as they bear teſtimony to the ingenuity and abilities of the artiſts of an unknown age; ſo they are ſome acknowledgment of the tranquillity, improvements, and happineſs of this country, ages before our accounts of it commence. The ornamental arts are only practiſed and admired, when leiſure, quiet, and ſecurity is much enjoyed; and they muſt have been greatly encouraged and delighted in, before they could have come to ſuch perfection. Had the *Caledonians* been earlier capable of recording their ſtory, it is probable we ſhould have been preſented with many pictures of eaſy life, of rural happineſs and peaceful years; perhaps of civil policy and ſuperior improvements, enjoyed by the inhabitants of theſe northern provinces, previous to thoſe turbulent ages, to which our hiſtories extend.

The numerous remains of antient towers and caſtles, both inland and upon the ſhores; the decayed monaſteries, and other religious buildings, all give evidence that *Roſs ſhore* has been long held a field of valuable ſettlements: and now the whole ride round its eaſtmoſt extremity is through well-cultivated fields, and commonly very pleaſant ſeats in view.

Near to *Tain* ſtand the walls of the chapel of St. *Duthac*, or St. *Duffus*, who died in 1249 biſhop of *Roſs*, and for his great piety was enrolled among the ſaints *. It was deſtroyed in the

* *Keith's* Biſhops of *Scotl.* 110.

year

year 1427 *. An inveterate enmity had taken place between a laird of *Freſwick* and a *M'Kay* of *Creigh*: *Freſwick* was attacked, purſued, and fled to the chapel, then a noted ſanctuary; but his implacable enemy ſet fire to the building, and *Freſwick* periſhed in the flames.

A COLLEGIATE church was founded at *Tain*, by *Thomas* biſhop of *Roſs*, in the year 1481, for a dean, eleven prebendaries, and three ſinging-boys †. The whole building is ſtill pretty entire, particularly the eaſt window, which is a very ſumptuous and beautiful ſpecimen of the gothic ſtyle, prevalent in that age.

ST. BAR, biſhop of *Caithneſs*, erected a place of worſhip at *Dornoch*, in the eleventh century: there alſo Sir *Patrick Murray* founded a monaſtery of *Trinity* friars, in the year 1271: and ſoon after, *Gilbert Murray*, biſhop of *Caithneſs*, built a church, the cathedral of his dioceſe; and its remains ſhew, that the building has had a magnificence correſponding with the intent: it ſuffered a ſimilar fate with the chapel of St. *Duffus*, but in a more memorable feud.

AN earl of *Caithneſs* had contrived to cut off the family of *Sutherland*, in order to invade their poſſeſſions; a boy, the heir, was preſerved alive; and, to give his deſigns a fair and generous appearance, the earl of *Caithneſs* took the youth under his protection, and managed his eſtate for him. The *Murrays*, who were the moſt powerful chieftains of *Sutherland*, did not reliſh their lord's being under the tuition of the earl of *Caithneſs*; and therefore conſulted and accompliſhed his removal, declaring at

* Conflicts of the Clans, 12. † *Keith*'s Account of Religious houſes.

the

the ſame time, that they would no more pay allegiance to the earl of *Caithneſs* as protector of *Sutherland*; and dreading his reſentment, ſtrengthened themſelves in the town and caſtle of *Dornoch*. The earl of *Caithneſs* ſent his ſon, at the head of a large body of men, to reduce them to obedience by force of arms, and *Dornoch* was beſieged; the *Murrays* defended it for ſeveral days with great reſolution: but the oppoſite party having penetrated into the ſkirts of the town, with horrid policy ſet it on fire; the cathedral catched the flames, and ſhared the general ruin *.

In biſhop *Murray*'s time, about the year 1260, the *Danes* made a deſcent on this coaſt, but were routed and drove to their veſſels; a brother of the biſhop's however fell in the fight, and is ſaid to have been laid in a ſtone coffin above ground, near the font, in the eaſt aile of the cathedral; in the place I found buried, in the looſe earth, a well-cut figure of a warrior, perhaps repreſenting the general, and had been placed on the lid of the coffin, as was cuſtomary at the time. The monument without the town, called *Thanes-croſs*, is commonly ſaid to have been erected in memory of the above victory; but it is eſſentially different from any obeliſk that has been ſaid to have reference to ſuch events.

It is alſo of a kind diſtinct from thoſe at *Aberlemni*, or on *Tarbetneſs*; it has none of the ſplendid enrichments wherewith they are diſtinguiſhed. A large circle at the top is perforated, forming a croſs within: the pillar plain; only in a frame on one

* Conflicts of the Clans, 32.

ſide

ſide is carved the *Sutherland* arms, on the other the armorial enſigns of *Caithneſs*. Thence I ſhould imagine it had been erected to ſettle ſome boundary, or in memory of ſome alliance formed between the earls of theſe contending counties. It perhaps may give ſome validity to the conjecture, when one reflects that other monuments were raiſed with ſimilar intent, about that æra, and the practice might not be uncommon. *Kings-croſs*, raiſed in *Stanemore*, on the borders of *Cumberland*, had on one ſide the arms of *William* of *England*, on the other *Malcolm's* III. of *Scotland*; and was erected as the boundary of their kingdoms, on the concluſion of the treaty of peace, which they entered into in the end of the eleventh century *.

* *Buchan.* lib. vii. Life of *Malcolm* III.

LETTER

LETTER XIII.

Helmiſdale, June 15th.

THE family of *Sutherland* had a chapel of eaſe at *Golſpie*, dedicated to St. *Andrew*; near the place where it ſtood, a curious obeliſk is lying on the ground; the figures on it very diſtinctly marked; but in a ruder ſtyle than thoſe on the monuments mentioned in my laſt. Immediately under the wild ornaments that generally finiſh them above, there is an uncouth figure, of a large elephant-like animal. This hieroglyphic has had ſome favourite alluſion: it makes a diſtinguiſhed appearance on ſeveral of theſe ſtones. On that at *Golſpie*, it ſtretches over a man with a croſs in one hand and a knife in the other, wherewith he ſeems to attack an animal of the bear-kind: the knife, however, points alſo to the head of a fiſh reſembling a ſalmon: its introduction may, perhaps, imply the early importance in which the capture of them was held. Two circles, ſceptres, and other emblems, ſomething ſimilar to thoſe on the ſtones at *Aberlemni*, will, I ſuſpect, remain inexplicable. I forgot, however, to mention, that on the beautiful fragments on *Tarbetneſs*, ſome of theſe circles are ſerpents with two heads meeting, their tails convolved, and including ſeveral circular ornaments; and may have had reference to a well-known emblem of eternity; and in that way expreſſed the laſting fame of the hero in whoſe memory the monument was raiſed.

THE

THE limeſtone quarry above *Brora* is an intereſting fund of ſpeculation: the variety of ſhells contained in the heart of the ſtone is equally ſurpriſing and beautiful; many of them very different in form from any now found on theſe ſhores. Often the rock, when broken to pieces, allows the ſhells to fall out entire, retaining fine impreſſions of their ſhapes: many precipices on the banks of the river *Brora* are alſo full of ſhells.

" * THE arable part of *Sutherland*, along the coaſt, is very " narrow, confined by lofty black mountains," which riſe almoſt directly from the ſhore, and ſeem to exclude all acceſs into the interior country. In conſequence of your commands, I was not a little deſirous of knowing what ſcenery might be found within the firſt range of mountains; and was fortunate enough to meet with a gentleman at *Kintradwel*, who in the purſuit of deer had been frequently led far among the inland rocks and foreſts, and offered to accompany me a day or two's journey into theſe wilds; and I ſhall not regret the toil, if the account of our diſcovery of ſome moſt ancient buildings prove intereſting enough to yield you any entertainment.

WE had advanced ſeveral miles, through the moſt rugged paths imaginable, along the rocky and wooded ſides of the river *Brora*, when I was ſtruck with admiration by the noble appearance of the ruins of a large circular tower, placed on an adjacent eminence at *Achir na Kyle*. This I ſoon diſcovered to be a very perfect ſpecimen of the architecture I was in ſearch of. It is ſituated with

* Tour in *Scotl.* 69.

peculiar taſte on the top of a lofty rock, oppoſite to ſome pleaſant woods, and near excellent paſture; and round the precipice which overhangs the *Brora*, the river tumbles over its rocky channel in a number of irregular caſcades. This building would have doubtleſs merited a very particular deſcription, had it not correſponded with your account of thoſe in *Glen-elg*. I muſt except the apartments within the walls, which are of an oval form, diſtinct and entire; about eight feet long, ſix high, and four wide; thoſe on the ground-floor are ſtill a place of refuge from the ſtorm, for the goats that feed on the neighbouring hills; it would alſo ſeem, from their being ſo free of rubbiſh, that it has from time to time been cleared away, by thoſe who take care of the goats and other cattle in thoſe parts. The ſtairs of communication, from the firſt to the ſecond row of chambers, are regular and commodiouſly made out: the apartments are carefully lighted by windows from within; a ſtrong evidence, that the area within theſe towers had never been cloſed above, nor entirely covered. The door looks over the precipice towards the river, and is full ſix feet high, as I ſhould ſuppoſe all of the kind have been, ere they were choaked up by the ruins of the building. One chamber had ſeveral paces of a level entry to it, and meaſured nine feet in height; this has been probably intended for the chieftain and head of the family who reſided in the tower. The whole ſtructure ſeems to me ſo well contrived, that it is not eaſy to conceive in what manner a people who could not work in wood or iron, could have been more conveniently accommodated in places of defence. The ſpace for the hall in this, is about twenty feet diameter.

diameter. From the quantity of ruins, this caſtle muſt have been pretty high, probably ſo as to admit of a third row of chambers; the walls at preſent do not exceed fifteen feet. In theſe parts, this building is not ſingular: they have been very numerous among theſe hills. Wherever good paſture is found, near the leſs rugged foreſts, there one meets with the remains of a circular tower.

I saw two others, fallen into a ſhapeleſs ſtate; and had particular information of one more complete than any that I had ſeen; but by every account, the unfrequented paths to it, amidſt the dreary receſſes of theſe mountains, were too horrible to be tried. This ſhort excurſion has thoroughly convinced me, that theſe ſtructures have been all originally built on the ſame plan, and have been the reſidence of the chief families of a hardy race, in a very early age. Near the towers are commonly ſeveral *carns*, not monuments of the deceaſed, but a ſpecies of ſtrong holds, which have one or two oval apartments within, (reſembling the chambers in the walls of the caſtles) and a vaſt heap of ſtones placed above to render them impregnable: theſe have probably been the retreats, in time of danger, of the vaſſals of thoſe chiefs, who were the proprietors of the adjacent towers. A little herdſman led the way, and I went into one of them, through a long narrow paſſage in the ſide of the carn; he alſo went into a dark under-ground hole which opened in the face of a green bank, where I did not chuſe to follow him; but he ſaid there was a ſimilar chamber within, where half a

* Tour in *Scotl.* 1769.

dozen of men might ſleep. Theſe may have been places of refuge for the loweſt of the people in times of feud and rapine; their ordinary dwellings having been reared of ſuch ſlight materials, as could not have, till now, withſtood the ravages of time.

But there may be others much larger and more elegant; furniſhed with numbers of lodges in the thickneſs of the walls. It is needleſs to add any thing concerning them, as you have given ſuch ample accounts of them from the authority of Mr. *Pope* *, illuſtrated with engravings from his deſigns. Their real uſe is alſo confirmed by the hand-mills, and heaps of bones of deer diſcovered in them; which prove them to have been the reſidence of chieftains, and not places of worſhip.

The proſpect beyond our route was of mountains, bleak, rocky, and deſolate, exhibiting the forbidding aſpect of incorrigible ſterility.

Loch Brora is a fine ſheet of water formed by the ſpreading of the river, in the bottom of a rich valley: it holds an extenſive mirror to *Crag-Carril*, the rocky face of a very lofty mountain, which overhangs the loch: *Crag-Carril* bears veſtiges of having been fortified round the top; has been long famed as the reſidence of eagles; but ſeems the reſort of birds of every kind. It preſents to the oppoſite farm at *Kil-calum-kil*, a moſt pictureſque and majeſtic ſcene.

Near to *Carril* are ſome charming fields, bounded by a craggy hill; from a cleft in the middle of the hill ruſhes forth a tor-

* Tour in *Scotl.* 1769, 336, 337. Tab. xlvi. xlvii.

CASCADE near CARRIL.

rent, which paſſing under a natural bridge of rock, daſhes down the precipice, and forms a wild and beautiful caſcade in its fall: the noiſe of the torrent echoing in a lofty and deep cavern; the cavern ſhagged with ſhrubs and aged trees, among which the wild-fowl make their neſts; the rivulet murmuring round inſulated piles of rock; and the diſtant proſpect of theſe halls and monuments of antient heroes, forcibly recall to mind the images of the *Oſſian* ſong. Here, perhaps, has *Carril*, whoſe name is ſtill preſerved in theſe ſcenes, muſed his wild and deſultory ſtrains: here, "amidſt the voices of rocks, and bright tum-"bling of waters, he might pour the ſound of his trembling "harp *."—Whether the memory of lapſed ages was preſerved by the bards, or if only, like a morning-dream, the viſions of *Oſſian* came in later days, yet "pleaſant are the words of the "ſong;" well do they paint theſe wilds, in all the ſtriking forms of their native grandeur and beauty. "Lovely are the tales of "other times;" they are faithful to the ſtory, which deceives the winter evening among the hills. "O *Carril*, raiſe again thy "voice; let me hear the ſong of *Selma*, which was ſung in the "halls of joy, when *Fingal*, king of ſhields, was there, and "glowed at the deeds of his fathers †."

But the light and joy of the ſong are fled; the halls of the renowned are left deſolate and ſolitary, amidſt rocks that no more echo to the ſound of the harp, amidſt ſtreams which murmur unheeded and unknown.

* *Temora*, Book vi. † *Fingal*, Book iii.

LETTER

LETTER XIV.

Rater, June 20th.

ON viſiting the ſhore at *Helmiſdale*, was much diſappointed to find the ſea ſo rough, that it was impracticable to get round the promontory in a boat, for theſe prodigious cliffs would doubtleſs have preſented ſome noble ſcenery. I was in ſome degree recompenſed by a heavy fall of rain; it made the mountains afford ſome proſpects extravagantly grand and new. In many places, where no ſtreams had been before perceptible, there were now a number of torrents, which poured from the higher grounds, and ruſhing down the ſteeps, through rugged channels worn by former floods, made a variety of vaſt impetuous caſcades, ſuperior in height, and foaming with a wildneſs of beauty, perhaps, beyond any that are perpetual. On the top of the *Ord*, ſaw one peculiarly ſtriking. A number of ſtreams coming down from the higher parts of that vaſt ridge of mountains, gathered into one channel, and formed a conſiderable body of water; this new-created river, hurling along with immenſe rapidity, directed its courſe over one of the higheſt precipices, and was thrown a great diſtance, without farther interruption, into the ſea. The cliff from which it fell was not leſs than a hundred fathom high. The torrent ſeemed like a white bending column, but in perpetual agitation; and round its baſe the foam and ſpray roſe to a great height: a ſmall veſſel might have ſailed betwixt it and the rocks.

THE

C.Cordiner pinx.

P.Mazell sculp.

MORVERN & SCURABEN.

COLUMN on the Coaſt of CAITHNESS.

THE proſpect of theſe ſtupendous cliffs is indeed magnificent to the laſt degree; and for a diſtant ſcene, the view alſo mentioned in your Tour, from *Knackanan*, is equally grand. When I ſaw the mountains of *Morven*, *Scaraben*, &c. a fine variety of clouds were ſailing round their ſides, and gave a noble expreſſion of their immenſe magnitude and prodigious height.

ON entering the plains of *Caithneſs*, I was peculiarly fortunate in meeting with Mr. *Sinclair* of *Scots-calder*, who has been kind enough to accompany me ever ſince, through many a rugged way, to view the rocky ſcenery, and caſtles on the coaſt, as well as to many an unfrequented hill; " * where ſtones were " raiſed on high, to ſpeak to future times with their grey heads " of moſs;" but whoſe ſtory " is now loſt in the miſt of years." By his influence, we always met with the beſt accommodation, and his companionable qualifications have rendered the jaunt through this province exceedingly more amuſing.

THERE is a very romantic fall of a rivulet, among the rocks, near the coaſt at *Clythneſs*; and from the adjacent cliff, a proſpect of a tall, ſhapely, inſulated column, riſing perpendicularly out of the ſea, oppoſite to a ſmooth and lofty precipice. I ſend a ſketch of it, as a ſpecimen of the *ſtacks*, which cut ſuch remarkable figures on the ſhores.

THE rocks near *Oldwick* caſtle are ſingularly wild and hideous, projecting into the ocean in the moſt formidable and gigantic ſhapes. What you have ſaid, on a ſimilar occaſion, is juſtly applicable here: " Many of the cliffs are hollowed " quite through, ſo as to form moſt magnificent arches, which

* *Temora*, Book viii.

" the ſea ruſhes through with vaſt noiſe and impetuoſity, afford-
" ing the moſt auguſt pieces of ſcenery."

OLDWICK CASTLE is a curious tower, and muſt be a building of great antiquity. It ſeems to be but a ſmall improvement of the circular ſtructures * mentioned in my laſt: it is built with cement, and is ſquare; in all other reſpects it reſembles them, and is evidently built after their model. There are ſmall chambers within the body of the wall, which is therefore enormouſly thick, and narrow ſtairs of communication between the upper and lower apartments: theſe open into the hall or area of the tower, in which there is no veſtige of there having been any diviſion. The outſide of the building ſcarcely ſhews any thing like windows, only a few ſmall ſquare openings, which ſeem to have been left for obſervation.

THE higher parts of the wall are compoſed of thin, flat, dry ſtones, which have been connected with little or no mortar. This caſtle ſeems, therefore, a ſpecimen of one of the firſt attempts of the inhabitants, to build new fortreſſes, after gaining the uſe of iron tools, and becoming acquainted with the application of cement; both which, the circular towers in the wilds of *Sutherland* give evidence, were utterly unknown to their builders.

THROUGH the moſt inland parts of *Caithneſs*, as well as along the coaſt, many remains of the round towers are yet to be ſeen, and ſome of the chambers in them acceſſible: but none in any degree ſo entire as thoſe among the *Sutherland* mountains. Here the acceſs to them is eaſier, and the well-choſen ſtones

* In the running-title, p. 74, *read* circular tower.

C Cordiner del. P. Mazell sc

OLDWICK CASTLE.

have from time to time been carried away, ſo that they are in general reduced to formleſs quarries.

I RECOLLECT to have obſerved, that Dr. *M'Pherſon*, in his *Antiquities of Scotland*, ſays, " It would not be eaſy to prove, that " the *Caledonians*, *Picts*, or antient *Scots*, had ſtone buildings of " any kind*." I cannot well ſubſcribe to this : yet muſt attribute them to another people, the *Danes*, who invaded *Scotland* about 860. No wonder, that now the ruins of ſuch uncemented piles ſhould be for the moſt part but a ſhapeleſs heap : — the greater wonder is, that there ſhould be remains of them at all. The æra when they were inhabited, cannot be placed at leſs than ſix or ſeven hundred years diſtance ; for the *Danes* evacuated the main land of *Scoland* in the beginning of the eleventh century : yet I believe they were, for ſome time after their retreat, poſſeſſed by the chieftains of the country. It is probable they went into diſuſe when the inhabitants of the north of *Scotland* learned to work in wood and iron. But the ſpacious remains of ſeveral of theſe ſtrong towers, are expreſſive monuments of power veſted in chieftains and heroes ; and of ſubordination and diſcipline among their vaſſals, at early periods.

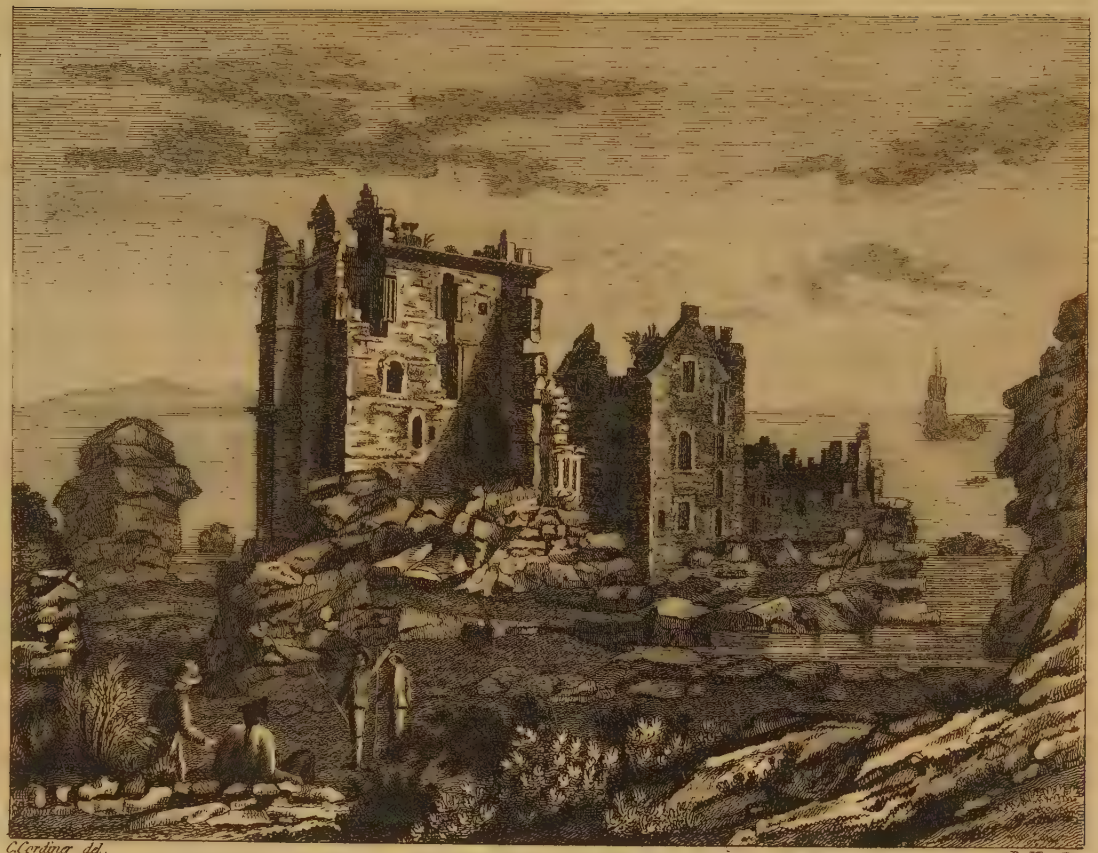
ONE is much diſpoſed to think of the " feaſt of ſhells," in theſe halls of antient heroes ; and to ruminate on all thoſe circumſtances, with reſpect to them, ſo particularly celebrated by the ſon of *Fingal*. But how ſhall we reconcile oppoſing teſtimonies ? the heroes appear in burniſhed armour, and " ſteel min-

* P. 320 of that admirable performance.

"gles with ſteel," at a time when a hammer was not lifted, nor a trowel uſed in the palaces of their princes.

BRAAL-CASTLE is a very antient ſtructure, built a good deal in the ſtyle of *Oldwick*; but with ſeveral improvements; the chambers in the wall, are faced with ſquare ſtones thoroughly ſmoothed; and a bench is raiſed all round for ſitting on, except where the apartments communicate with the hall; and each chamber has a window looking into the fields. The ſtair-caſes are more ſpacious, and the whole building thoroughly cemented. *Braal* I ſhould apprehend to be much older than *Freſwick* caſtle; and the ſtyle of building theſe fortreſſes, would every age receive improvement, until the laſt century, when *Guernigo*, *Sinclair*, and *Akirgal* caſtles were built, which are palaces when compared with *Oldwick*, *Braal*, or *Dilred*. Places of ſtrength and defence are now no longer of any moment; lightneſs and elegance, as in other parts of the kingdom, are become the characteriſtics of the principal dwellings.

THE country round *Braal* is fertile and pleaſant: ſome aged trees ſpreading near the caſtle, have the richer effect, on account of the uniform barrenneſs of the neighbouring grounds. The tower ſtands on an eminence; the river *Thurſo* runs by, and yields plenty of ſalmon. A large plot of garden-ground is encloſed with high walls; ſome walks in it are well laid out, amidſt rows of fruit-trees, bearing plenty of apples, pears, and cherries. This, in the twelfth century, was occaſionally the reſidence of the earls of *Caithneſs*; the biſhop had a dwelling near. *Braal* is ſituated four or five miles up from *Thurſo*, beyond are rough moraſſy commons, which frequently vary into very ſtony



C.Cordiner del. P. Mazell sc.

SINCLAIR & GUERNIGO CASTLES.

C Cordiner dd.

P. Mazell sc

DILRED CASTLE.

ground; ſometimes the ſtratum of rock entirely deſtitute of ſoil: thence very tedious paths winding through the heath, to avoid the boggy grounds, and rougher parts of the hills; for near to *Dilred-caſtle*, which is twelve or fifteen miles from the coaſt, the country becomes mountainous.

DILRED has a moſt remarkable ſituation: built upon the top of a ſteep circular rock, riſing almoſt perpendicularly out of the banks of the *Thurſo*, and overhanging its craggy channel, there is on no ſide acceſs to it, but by climbing; ſome ſteps ſeem to have been faſhioned up the one ſide of the rock; but they are too ill executed, to yield any thing but a dangerous path: oppoſite to it are ſeveral exceedingly picturesque and rugged cliffs, which bound the courſe of the river to a conſiderable diſtance on either hand. On the top of an adjacent precipice is an encloſed burying-ground, with a number of moſs-grown grave-ſtones in it.

IN the more champaign part of *Caithneſs*, the beauty of the farms is remarkable; many of the corn-fields of great extent, ſhewing a rich uninterrupted verdure, for ſeveral miles together.

THE environs of a fine lake near to *Watten*, were peculiarly pleaſant. Two miles from *Watten* down towards the coaſt, in the midſt of a marſhy heath, there is a very compleat circular fort, it ſeems almoſt entire, being raiſed of earth and turf, without any ſtones in it, there has been no temptation to deſtroy it. This *moat* conſiſts of two thick and well-raiſed ramparts, drawn in a perfect circle, the one within the other, and between them a wide trench, very deep and full of water. Although the ditch is a good deal choaked up, with the graſs and

ruſhes of many years, yet it is ſtill impaſſable but at the proper gateway, where a mound of earth forms a bridge. The outer rampart is two hundred yards in circumference. The rampart within the trench incloſes an area of five-and-twenty yards diameter. This may have been a temporary fortreſs, raiſed by the *Norſe* invaders, in ſome of their depredations: and a place to ſecure the ſpoil, until they found leiſure to convey it to their veſſels; for even in early ages, the ſtrong holds of the inhabitants, as is evident from their remains, were built with ſtones. And that theſe *moats* were courts of juſtice, as often the *druidical* circles were, is not very probable, as it is not eaſy to conceive on what account they would, in that caſe, have been ſo formidably fenced.

Round the foot of the outward rampart of the above, there is a regular hedge of ſcraggy trees and buſhes; but the planting of that ſeems to have been of a more modern date; perhaps the work of ſome one who had more than common veneration for antiquity, either to ornament the ground, or prevent cattle from ſpoiling it.

The riſing grounds of the interior country, that are yet uncultivated, have many rude obeliſks ſtanding on them. On one hill, not many miles from the ſhore, obſerved a very ſingular collection, all well-ſhaped, thick flag-ſtones, ſtanding erect, and from four to ſix feet high: theſe are diſpoſed in regular rows, ſix feet diſtant; there are twenty rows, and twenty ſtones in each, ſo that there are no leſs than four hundred in that one ſpot. It is ſaid to have been a field of battle—the ſtones, the number of the warriors ſlain. Such traditions are unſatisfactory. If it has

at all been a burying-ground, they have been exceedingly attentive to the regularity and order of the monuments of the dead; while there are no diſtinguiſhing marks on any of the ſtones. They might however know any particular grave, by its number in the lines. The place is called by the appoſite name of the "*Hill of many ſtones.*"

Along the north ſhore, it is a delightful ride, from *John-a-Grot's (Dungſby-head)* to this place, through fields whoſe ſmoothneſs and vivid verdure expreſs a luxuriant ſoil, and elaborate cultivation. The *Orcades* ſpreading along the horizon, yield a charming proſpect: ſome of the iſlands ſo near, as diſtinctly to exhibit the rocky fronts of theſe bold promontories, which ſuſtain the weight of the vaſt currents from the *Atlantic*; others more faint; their diſtances finely expreſſed, as they retire from the eye, until the mountains of the more remote ſhew ſcarcely a deeper azure than the ſky, and are hardly diſcernible riſing over the ſurface of the ocean.

My writing from the preſent ſeat of the earl of *Caithneſs*, forcibly recalls to mind the ſtory of thoſe who in early ages laid claim to that title, and contended in arms for its emoluments and honours. The ſcenes of their naval conflicts are in view; their fields of battle are ſpoken of all around, and, awakening the memory of former tranſactions, give them a peculiar reliſh and importance. All the great events of this country are recorded by *Thormodus Torfæus*, the learned *Icelander*, with peculiar ſpirit. I think myſelf obliged to you for Mr. *Pope*'s tranſlation of his hiſtory of the *Orknies*, from which I have extracted all which relates to the countries I have travelled: but

do

do aſſure you, the labour of this abridgment has coſt me more pains than all the reſt of my work. This hiſtorical account I beg leave to add, as a proper appendage to this book.——But, to continue my tour.

JUNE 23d, I went from *Rater* to *Thurſo*. The road for ſeveral miles lies along a ſmooth extenſive beach of ſand, which ſeems to have gained upon the country; for in the midſt of it there is a conſiderable mount, which on examination proved to be the remains of ſome farm-houſes.

THE neighbouring fields are very level, and I obſerved the ſand ſtill floating with the wind towards them. It muſt ſoon deſtroy more arable land, if ſome expedient is not fallen on to ſtop its progreſs *.

THURSO

* "I have more than once, on the eaſtern coaſts of *Scotland*, obſerved the "calamitous ſtate of ſeveral extenſive tracts, formerly in a moſt flouriſhing "condition, at preſent covered with ſands, unſtable as thoſe of the deſerts of "*Arabia*. The pariſh of *Furvie*, in the county of *Aberdeen*, is now reduced to "two farms, and above £. 500 a year loſt to the *Errol* family, as appears by the "oath of the factor in 1600, made before the court of ſeſſion, to aſcertain the "miniſter's ſalary. Not a veſtige is to be ſeen of any buildings, unleſs a frag-"ment of the church.

"The eſtate of *Coubin*, near *Forres*, is another melancholy inſtance. This "tract was once worth £. 300 a year, at this time overwhelmed with ſand. "This ſtrange inundation was ſtill in motion in 1769, chiefly when a ſtrong "wind prevailed. Its motion is ſo rapid, that I have been aſſured, that an "apple-tree has been ſo covered with it in one ſeaſon, that only the very "ſummit appeared. This diſtreſs was brought on about ninety years ago, and "was occaſioned by the cutting down ſome trees, and pulling up the Bent or Star

"which

THURSO is ſituated at the bottom of a ſpacious bay of that name, covered on the north-eaſt by *Dunnet-head*, and bounded on the weſt by another very bold promontory. It is a very ca-

" which grew on the ſand-hills; which at laſt gave riſe to the act of 15 *George* II. " c. 33. to prohibit the deſtruction of this uſeful plant.

" I beg leave to ſuggeſt to the public a poſſible means of putting a ſtop to theſe " deſtructive ravages. Providence hath kindly formed this plant to grow only " in pure ſand. Mankind was left to make, in after-times, an application of " it ſuitable to their wants. The ſand-hills, on a portion of the *Flintſhire* " ſhores, in the pariſh of *Llanaſa*, are covered with it naturally, and kept firm " in their place. The *Dutch* perhaps owe the exiſtence, of part at leſt of their " country, to the ſowing of it on the *mobile ſolum*, their ſand-banks.

" My humane and amiable friend, the late *Benjamin Stillingfleet*, Eſq; re- " commended the ſowing of this plant on the ſandy wilds of *Norfolk*, that its " matted roots might prevent the deluges of ſand which that county expe- " riences. It has been already remarked, that whereſoever this plant grows, " the ſalutary effects are ſoon obſerved to follow. A ſingle plant will fix the " ſand, and gather it into a hillock; theſe hillocks, by the increaſe of vege- " tation, are formed into larger, till by degrees a barrier is made often againſt " the encroachments of the ſea; and might as often prove preventative of the " calamity in queſtion.

" I cannot, therefore, but recommend the trial to the inhabitants of many " parts of *North Britain*. The plant grows in moſt places near the ſea, and is " known to the highlanders by the name of *Murah*; to the *Engliſh* by that of " *Bent-ſtar*, *Mat-graſs*, or *Marram*. *Linnæus* calls it *Arundo arenaria*. The " *Dutch* call it *Helm*.

" This plant hath ſtiff and ſharp-pointed leaves, growing like a ruſh, a foot " and a half long: the roots both creep and penetrate deeply into their ſandy " beds: the ſtalk bears an ear five or ſix inches long, not unlike rye: the ſeeds " are ſmall, brown, and roundiſh. By good fortune, as old *Gerard* obſerves, " no cattle will eat or touch this vegetable, allotted for other purpoſes, ſub- " ſervient to the uſe of mankind." T. P.

pacious,

pacious, and may in general be a pretty ſafe road; but when there are ſtrong winds from the north-weſt, a very heavy ſea muſt come aſhore. The harbour is formed only by the ſea's flowing into the channel of the river: the veſſels lie-to for loading and unloading at its banks. Their trade chiefly ariſes from the export of corn, oatmeal, ſalmon, herrings, and other ſtaple commodities of the country; and in bringing home ſuch articles as are required by the inhabitants, for cloaths, building, luxuries: wood, iron, wines, ſalt, ſugar, &c.

I WAS told, that in ſome years there is grain exported from *Caithneſs* to the extent of forty thouſand bolls.

THE preſent church of *Thurſo* was of old the biſhop of *Caithneſs*'s chapel. It is a large ſtately building, but not ornamental. The diviſions of the gothic window are maſſy, not elegant; no way equal to the church at *Tain*. The caſtle in which the biſhops reſided, ſtood on a rocky mount a little weſt from the town. The remaining walls ſhew that it has been ſtrongly built, and defenſible. There ſeems to have been apartments in the thickneſs of the wall, ſomething like thoſe of *Braal* caſtle: but the whole is ſo entirely ruinous, as not to admit of a poſitive deſcription.

THE head-land which ſtretches north into the ſea from *Scrabſter*, is full of horrid caverns; at a great diſtance from the precipices, there are gloomy openings in the green, like wells or pits; on approaching the verge of theſe, one hears the ſea roaring at the bottom; and can ſometimes obſerve the whiteneſs of the ſpray foaming beneath in the abyſſes.

SEVERAL

Several of theſe ſubterraneous vaults open to the ſea, in noble caves, with lofty entrances. And a little way from the main-land cliffs, are ſome finely inſulated columns, large towering maſſes of rock; in many places cleft, ſo that the ſea-fowl find ſecure abodes in the dark receſſes within.

One need not ſay that here at this ſeaſon is a great length, but entire continuance of day. I have made the experiment at what is commonly termed midnight, and found there was no deficiency of light, to diſable one from reading or writing with eaſe.

June 24. Find that I ſhall be under the neceſſity of returning the horſes by the eaſt coaſt, to meet me at *Tain*, having formed the reſolution of going round to *Roſsſhire*, through the moſt mountainous parts of *Strathnaver*. Large horſes cannot take that route, not only on account of the exceeding roughneſs of the rocky heaths; the difficulty of the paths among hills, where climbing is often neceſſary, and the dangerous nature of the ſwamps and moraſſy grounds: but, as it is not practicable to carry corn and hay into the wilds; the finding of good graſs being extremely precarious, and provender of any kind very difficult to be obtained; all they who wiſh to penetrate into the more remote and deſert diſtricts of *Strathnaver*, muſt be furniſhed with the hardy ponies of the country; a breed, I believe, originally from the *Orcades*. Theſe being accuſtomed to climb among rocks; to jump between hillocks among bogs; to feed on birch-leaves, or any green ſtuff that grows among the hills, are the only proper horſes for the journey. I was favoured with a

couple of theſe, and guides who could ſpeak both the *Erſe* and *Engliſh* languages, by Mr. *Sinclair*, of *Scotſcalder*.—Saw ſome planting riſing round his ſeat, about five miles ſouth-weſt from *Thurſo*, and ſeemingly in a thriving way. There are ſome good trees in the gardens at *Weſtfield*, a ſeat within a few miles of the former. Capt. *Dunbar*, the proprietor of the laſt, has lately diſcovered ſome excellent marl, in the bottom of a loch on his eſtate: its good effects are already obſervable in the richneſs of the neighbouring farms, and in the luxuriance of his fields. The houſe of *Weſtfield* is a ſquare tower, but a modern building. The rooms are large and elegant. The roof is flat, deſigned for walking on, and commands the proſpect of a pleaſant country.

June 25th. Rode down to the coaſt at the kirk of *Rae*, had for ſeveral hours the pleaſure of Mr. *Pope*'s converſation, who has already made himſelf known to you, by his account of the antiquities, and other things remarkable in theſe counties *. I received much inſtruction and entertainment from his free communication of whatever farther occurred on theſe ſubjects, or had reference to the objects of my jaunt, and ſhall as I paſs along uſe his obſervations, to correct or enlarge my own.

We ſaw a farmer ſowing; it appeared to me a very late ſeed-time, but he ſaid he was as early as uſual, and would lay a bet to have harveſt as ſoon as any in *Scotland*. The ſoil of that lot

* See Tour in *Scotl.* 1769. 336.

of

of ground indeed was peculiarly warm, ſandy, and dry: but the grain in the neighbourhood is ſeldom much above ſix weeks in the ground, until the crop is ready for being reaped *.

A SHORT walk led to *Sanſide*, a ſpacious ſeat, placed on a rocky mount, which however the proprietor is with infinite labour levelling at top. The ſituation has been the choice of a former age: it is ſurrounded with a ſoil naturally barren; its ruggedneſs is however faſt giving place to the improvements of agriculture and art.

Mr. *Innes* is every day making the face of his lands put on a more poliſhed appearance. His parks of ſown graſs, (a circumſtance new in this country) yield quantities of the fineſt hay: and myriads of firs are riſing in incloſures of great extent.

THE coaſt here is formed into ſmall bays, correſponding with the openings of the dales or vallies, which run up between the ridges of the hills; theſe have generally a pretty level beach, interſperſed with few rocks, and compoſed of pebbles, ſhells, and ſand. But where the intermediate mountains ſtretch into the ocean, their fronts are immenſely bold, lofty, and rugged; often ſhattered into the ſtrangeſt piles: ſome of theſe aſſume the appearance of huge pyramids placed on the ſhore, others riſing perpendicularly from the ocean, and entirely ſeparated, at various diſtances from the main, are diverſified by the ſtrangeſt variety of forms: here like irregular ſpires, and vaſt towering columns, with leſſer obeliſks by them: there of ſpacious front, and pro-

* The ſummer here is far ſhorter than that of *Sibiria*, where the whole operation of ploughing, ſowing, and reaping, is confined to fifty-nine days.

digious magnitude, clefted to a great height from the ſea, ſo that in various directions they may be ſailed through and through; and in the deep receſſes of theſe enormous cells the ſea-fowl remain unmoleſted and ſecure; even when the winter-ſtorm makes the heavieſt billows of the *Atlantic* roar around them. Some of the largeſt of theſe are covered with graſs, and it has been in agitation to contrive a method of getting ſheep or goats put upon them. That would make the proſpect ſtill more romantic. The precipices are in general animated with multitudes of coots, gulls, kittywakes, *&c.* and the whole preſents a field of the moſt noble and wildeſt ſcenery. I attempted to give an idea of ſome of theſe by drawings, but found my ſketches very inadequate to expreſs the grandeur of theſe enormous rocks.

The hoſpitality of theſe coaſts appears no leſs romantic than the ſcenery. The being a ſtranger, ſeems to be a title to every office of friendſhip, and to the moſt diſtinguiſhed marks of attention and civility. Enter

STRATHNAVER.

June 26. Was accompanied by Mr. *M'Kay* of *Bighouſe*, and rode ſeveral miles over a very coarſe heath, interſected with deep ſloughs, which kept the horſes perpetually jumping. Theſe fields are often rocky, and ſeemingly too ſtubborn to be ever much reduced to human uſe. At noon we turned round a craggy hill, and came down into

STRATH-

STRATH-HALLAD-DALE,

and were ſoon in ſight of Mr. *M'Kay*'s ſeat, which formed a complete contraſt to the rugged ſcenes on the way. It is ſituated at the mouth of a ſmooth flowing river, on a bank which commands an extenſive proſpect of the ſea, and fronts one of the ſweeteſt of thoſe dales, that are the habitable parts of *Strathnaver*. It is a rich but narrow valley, which, for ſeveral miles, divides the mountains, and forms a winding plain on each ſide of the river. It produces fine natural graſs, which grows ſufficiently long to be cut for hay; and the ſoil is eaſily tilled. The improvements of agriculture are here much ſtudied, and make conſiderable progreſs: but when the views of the proprietor extend beyond the dale, and he attempts to gain upon the hill, the ſoil is ſo perplexed with rocks, and interwoven roots of ſhrubs, that the expence of labour in reducing it, renders the purchaſe dear.

In the dale the climate ſeems ſufficiently warm. The appearance of the gardens was unexpectedly pleaſing. In a ſpot encloſed with ſuch barren ridges of rocky hills, one does not look for ſuch a diſplay of luxuriance; the borders decked with variety of the richeſt flowers, plenty of wall-fruits; apples, pears, plums, cherries, which are often as early ripe as at *Edinburgh*; beds of melons and cucumbers; and whatever can give variety, or grace the entertainments of the table.

A few miles up the river, on the ſide of a hill, there are ſeveral carns, the ſuppoſed monuments of heroes who fell in battle: on one riſing ground, obſerved a well-ſhaped taper monument, about

eight feet high; on another, one in a form of a croſs; but no ſculpture on either *.

From an acjacent hill, was preſented with a view of the moſt mountainous parts of *Strathnaver*, regions that ſeemed to mingle with the clouds. The more immenſe and diſtant ſummits of the mountains roſe from the horizon into the ſky, like thin blue vapours, ſoftened with ſhades, ſcarcely diſtinguiſhable from the azure of the firmament. The medium through which we ſee is blue. All objects partake of it, in proportion to their diſtance from the eye. When very remote, they ſeem entirely to loſe their own natural colour, and put on the tinge of the pure æther. When mountains appear near to the tint of a cloudleſs ſky, both their ſize and diſtance may be depended on to be great.

"The eye ranging over the plains of *Ægypt*, and catching "the blue point of a pyramid, from the colour concludes the "diſtance, and wonders at the greatneſs of the pile †."

The *Strathnaver* mountains, towards which I muſt now bend my way, are in gigantic forms, looking over the vaſt tract of intermediate country, with all that airy blueneſs, which can indicate them lofty and remote.

* Some miles diſtant there are ſimilar appearances, on a riſing ground near *Dale-Harold*, on the river *Naver*. There an extenſive level moor is ſtill called, in the *Erſe* language, "the Field of Blood:" and the number of carns and rude obeliſks point it out to have been the ſcene of action that has terminated ſome violent feud, and where eminent perſons had fallen.

† Eſſay on Prints.

JUNE 27th. Proceed along the north coaſt, weſtward. From *Strath-hallad-dale*, the ſame rough roads continue. At the diſtance of ſix or eight miles, they lead down to

STRATHY-BAY.

THERE was a ſtranded veſſel lying on the ſands. She had been run aſhore in a ſtorm, and beat ſo far up, that ſhe cannot be got afloat again. They have not timber to prepare a launch: but a number of men are employed in turning the courſe of a rivulet, that, forming its channel where the veſſel lies, it may clear her way to the ſea.

ABOUT four or five miles further weſt, another valley opens to the ſea, called

ARMIS-DALE.

THIS is a dreary ſolitude, terminating in the wildeſt rocks upon the ſhore: its very bottom rugged, barren, altogether uninhabited. The ſcenery becomes more auguſt and gloomy. The craggy brows of the hills frowning over the dale, make one tremble to enter it. The country, from the oppoſite height, puts on the moſt deſolate and forlorn appearance. The wildneſs continually increaſing, the paths become more rugged, every avenue among the hills, perplexed with ranges of immenſe ſtones, renders travelling extremely difficult. For ſeveral miles, the beſt road which the guides could take, was in the channel of a rivulet, and its bed was far from being ſmooth: nothing to be ſeen around but a wilderneſs of rocks. After ſtruggling on for ſeveral miles, by following the courſe of the ſtream, we were led

to

to the ſhore, at a place where there was a ſmall tract of green fields adjoining to ſome fiſhermen's houſes. There ſeemed ſomething very comfortable even in the look of theſe, after having wandered many hours in ſo dreary and unhoſpitable a deſert. Theſe I ſhould ſuppoſe to have been the demeſne, belonging to the adjacent caſtle of

BOORVE.

This very antient fortreſs is ſituated on a lofty oblong rock riſing out of deep water, and inacceſſible on all ſides but by a very narrow neck, which joins it to the precipices on the main. The cliffs are here about one hundred and fifty feet high: that, in particular, on which the caſtle is built. The area round the building is upwards of two hundred feet ſquare. The vaulted paſſage, formed by nature, through and through the rock beneath, is well deſcribed by Mr. *Pope* *.

This tower is underſtood to have been once the reſidence of *Thorkel*, one of the famous buccaneers in the tenth century, mentioned by *Torfæus*; and (as will be obſerved when mentioning the conflicts of the clans) was beſieged and deſtroyed by the earl of *Sutherland* in 1555.

The coaſt is here disjoined into larger maſſes, forming a number of rocky iſlands, ſome of them of conſiderable extent,

* Through the rock upon which the tower ſtands, there is a paſſage below of two hundred feet in length, like a grand arch or vault, through which they row a boat. The paſſage is ſo long, that when you enter at one end, you fancy that there is no poſſibility to get out at the other, *et vice verſa*: it is one of the moſt curious natural arches, perhaps, in the known world.

at

at various diſtances from the ſhore. From the promontory beyond the caſtle of *Boorve*, there is a moſt extenſive view of theſe, all the way to the firth of *Tongue*.

That promontory covers, on the eaſt, the bay of

F A R.

Several good houſes with farm-lands lie along the ſides of the bay; at the bottom of it ſtands the church, and near it there is a well-carved monument, with an ornamental croſs upon it: and from the reſemblance of the work, it is probably of a ſimilar date with thoſe at *Aberlemny* and on *Tarbet-neſs*.

Near the church of *Far*, there is a very tolerable inn: our horſes got provender, and there ſeemed no want of good accommodation.

Thence we took an inland route, and it appeared that we went ſtraight up into the country, although the intention was to keep along the north ſhore. Where there are no roads, one muſt make whatever ſweeps the prudence of the guides think neceſſary, to avoid the ſwamps and marſhes, or inacceſſible parts of the mountains. In the courſe of this circle, we paſſed through a ſmall but cultivated plain, in a kind of open country; a rivulet watered it, and its banks were enriched with hamlets and trees; but after a mile or two, on aſcending the neighbouring heights, the wildeſt appearances of nature were renewed, and we had to ſtruggle through the moſt uncomfortable waſtes, regions full of large looſe ſtones, among which it was often difficult to find ſoil enough to tread on.

In the evening we found our way along the beach of a lake, which, though ſtony, yielded a ſmoother and more pleaſant path than any that was to be found amid the rocky hills by which it was bounded. A number of tufted iſlands enriched the ſurface of the large expanſe of water, and it held a mirror to the lofty mountain of *Ben-lugal*, which made a majeſtic and picturesque back-ground to the ſcene. On quitting the lake, we turned north again down to the coaſt, through rocks ſtrowed over a narrow, deep, and gloomy valley. The mountainous ridge by which it was bounded on the weſt, terminated perpendicularly in precipices of enormous height. The craggy front projecting over the declivity, had rolled vaſt rocks into the bottom of the vale, which greatly obſtructed our way; and other immenſe maſſes, ſeemingly looſe, hanging on high, and threatening to tumble, every moment, down, made the paſſage round it hideous. But on gaining the oppoſite ſide of the mountain, a more pleaſant proſpect opened: cultivated grounds appeared.

TONGUE,

the ſeat of lord *Reay*, diſcoverable amidſt groups of well-grown trees; ranges of others incloſing gardens; a church and village; with fields of freſh verdure, ſtretching down to the banks of the firth; all conſpired to form a chearful and refreſhing ſcene.

Several iſlands riſe in the mouth of the firth of *Tongue*, and ſome of them are of conſiderable extent; but not inhabited; one or two of them are a kind of warrens, others yield variety of game.

Near

NEAR the ſhore, on the levelleſt bank of the firth, there formerly was a ſea-port town, the public mart of *Strathnaver*. The firth, indeed, within the iſlands, forms a charming harbour. It had almoſt ceaſed to be remembered, that there ever was a town there. But on the 27th of *July* 1751, a very heavy cloud of rain fell on the adjacent mountains: the ſhowers were peculiarly violent, and their force impetuous; theſe congregated waters ruſhing in a thouſand torrents down the hills, aſſembled in the deep-worn channel of the dale, and foaming through with their whole united force, exerted it in ſweeping an extenſive bank of ſand to the ſea. On its removal, the ruins of the town were diſcovered; whole ranges of buildings appeared, which had lain from time immemorial beneath the ſand: an additional proof of the devaſtations occaſioned by that dangerous and fluctuating ſoil.

IN theſe parts, commonly called lord *Reay*'s country, there are ſeveral rivers that yield ſalmon. About fourteen men are employed on the *Naver*, and they catch ſeventy or eighty barrels in a ſeaſon. *Hope*, *Durneſs*, *Layford*, are but ſmall rivers, and altogether do not yield more fiſh than the *Naver* does alone. Theſe ſalmon are ſent round to *Findhorn* in boats that carry caſks for them, and are thence ſhipped to the proper markets, along with what are caught on the coaſts of *Moray*, &c.

THERE are about eighty tons of kelp made annually on this coaſt. Leaving *Tongue*, paſſed by an old ſquare tower, called *Bar-caſtle*, or *Caſtle-varrich*, placed on a rugged mount, commanding a full view of the firth all the way down to the ſea, and reſted, for the night, in

RIBBY-DALE,

a romantic open valley, bounded by rugged and lofty mountains: a large rivulet pours its clear current in ſerpentine windings through the dale, here and there overſhadowed with trees of various ſize: all around, the eye is preſented with objects moſt majeſtically wild: on one hand, the ſhelvy heaths, which ſtretch up into the mountain *Ben-hope*; on the other, the dark hill and huge precipices which riſe beyond *Tongue*. On the north, a very rocky aſcent to the craggy eminence where *Barcaſtle* ſtands; but on the ſouth, in moſt diſtinguiſhed magnificence, is reared the lofty mountain of *Ben-lugal*. It riſes immediately from the dale, to a prodigious and precipitous height: its bold front, towering almoſt to the zenith of the ſky, is loſt in clouds and miſt; and ſeems to conſiſt of regions void of vegetation: immenſe maſſes of rock, formed into cliffs of various form, interwrought with trees and ſhrubs, and ſcattered pieces of verdure, next ſtrike the view; irregular belts of wood, ſtrewed along the declivities from where the precipices end, conſtitute the girdle of its enormous baſe, which, ſtretching down amid the ſofter beauties of the dale, makes a very grand and pleaſant landſcape.

Had one only to admire this ſo various and noble ſcenery, and not travel through the horrid paths, by which the exhibition is obtained; it would be extremely delightful.—They are alarming us with the difficulties of to-morrow's route; but the hope of ſeeing the celebrated *Dun* of *Dornadilla*, baniſhes every other care, and animates the thoughts of the journey.

JUNE 28. Having laid in proviſions for the way, at *Ribby-dale*, I ſet out early in the morning to be conducted to that famous tower.

I UNDERSTOOD, that the direct courſe thither lay between the mountains of *Ben-lugal* and *Ben-hope*; but the guides ſeemed convinced, that there the numberleſs pools, and moſſy ground ſoftened into bog by perpetual ſtreams from the hills, formed ſuch a labyrinth of ſloughs, that they could not undertake to carry our little caravan ſafely through; and it was found neceſſary to have an additional guide, more particularly acquainted with the route we were to take. Our way was to be ſought acroſs the mountain of

BEN-HOPE.

ITS top ſeems divided, and ſhows a hollow in the middle: through that diſtant valley were we to advance into the country beyond. The morning clouds were reſting between the towering ſummits of the mountain, as in regions of ſuperior tranquillity. When I firſt deſcried *Ben-hope*, and ſaw its ſhapeleſs head heaving into the horizon, and ſpreading like a vaſt vapour above, beyond the other hills, I could have formed no idea that I ſhould be under any temptation of attempting to gain its ſummit; yet this now became not only expedient but neceſſary. We advanced from the dale directly in front of the mountain. For ſome time the aſcent was perfectly eaſy; but the paths were to be ſought (for ſcarce any two choſe the ſame) amidſt large maſſes of rock which projected from the ſoil; round ſtones, and hillocks covered with heath, filled the intermediate ſpaces.

The ruggedneſs continued to increaſe as we approached the ſteeper parts of the mountain. The ponies wandered through with much ſeeming unconcern; but the danger of being thrown, on ſuch road, was conſiderable. On ſhowing an inclination to diſmount, the guides told me, "that I had better keep on "horſeback while the ways were good, becauſe by-and-by I "ſhould be under the neceſſity of walking." There was but little comfort in this admonition; however, I truſted that they were exaggerating, for it was not eaſy to conceive in what manner the face of the earth could be more horridly rugged. But ere we had advanced an hour, I found their obſervation had been pertinent and juſt; their declaration became perfectly realized; there remained no more poſſibility of riding.

The vaſt chaſms dug out by the winter torrents pouring down the ſteeps, were ſo frequent and irregular, that no art could avoid them: in many places, the ſoil was entirely waſhed away, and left the rocky mountain bare; in other places, it was ſtagnated in a ſoft and boggy ſtate, where one might plunge to an immeaſurable depth. Where the ſlope at any time was more level, and free of rock and bogs, the heath was rank and ſcraggy, and every part of the progreſs occaſioned new fatigue. The ponies, left to themſelves, followed us with great dexterity, and kept regular pace with us, whether we ſtruggled through the brake, or had occaſion to jump and climb.

Sometimes the aſcents were ſo very ſteep, and the ground precipitous, that we were obliged to make large ſweeps, by traverſing, to gain upon the hills. This toil, however, was not altogether void of entertainment; here, pictureſque and moſs-

grown rocks over-hung our way; there, paſſed the yawning gloom of ſome horrid cavern; or, from the higher eminences, looked down on the ſurrounding world, aſtoniſhed at the greatneſs of the ſcene. About noon we arrived at a level, where there was green herbs and coarſe graſs, and reſted that the horſes might feed. This place it ſeems is the uſual ſtage, where the weary travellers between theſe diſtant dales refreſh themſelves with a portion of whatever proviſion their prudence has carried along: it is a flat plot in the boſom of the mountain, ſheltered round, except where it opens to the ſouth-eaſt. The day was pretty calm and the ſky clear; the air felt warm, though evidently purer. The ſuperior diſtinctneſs of viſion was exceedingly pleaſant.

The proſpect of the northern ocean, interſperſed with iſlands, and the prodigious cliffs that project along theſe bold and mountainous ſhores, ſo extenſive from this high point of view, was elevating and grand. In one particular it very much ſurprized me. I had taken a ſketch of the firth of *Tongue*, from *Barcaſtle*, the preceding evening, and by that means had been particularly attentive to mark its effect, and now found, that after half a day's journey, the diſtance ſcarcely ſeemed any thing increaſed, nor any part of the proſpect leſs diſtinctly marked. The outline of the buildings at *Tongue* was ſo accurately defined, I thought I could have run down to it in half an hour.

Soon as they thought the ponies ſufficiently refreſhed, we renewed our journey up the mountain, and got into the clouds, which were hovering round its top. At firſt the miſt only obſtructed our view, but felt chilly as we advanced. When we

began

began to open the horizon beyond, ſudden guſts of wind came down between the cliffs into which the ſummit of the mountain is divided; and the clouds were toſſed about in eddies by the ſqualls, until they fell in ſhowers of mingled ſleet and rain. It became intenſely cold. The current of air, loaded with theſe embryo-ſnows, was extremely penetrating. We quickened our pace, to get beyond the higheſt part of our route, and ſoon found the difficulty of ſurmounting *Ben-hope* was over, and that we got into a milder climate again.

But a wide extent of deſert country lay before us, and exhibited a moſt auguſt picture of forlorn nature. The proſpect was altogether immenſe, but wild and deſolate beyond conception. The mountains preſented nothing to view, but heath and rock; between them formleſs lakes and pools, dark with the ſhades thrown from prodigious precipices, gave grandeur to the wilderneſs in its moſt gloomy forms. The proceeding into this uncomfortable deſert was not to be avoided.

The declivity of the mountain for ſome time yielded pretty good footing. The ſloping rocks were tolerably even, interſperſed and connected with firm turf, and as the levelleſt ridges could be followed in an eaſy deſcent, we made a moſt expeditious journey down a great part of the way. But, too ſoon, we came to an end of that noble pavement. A dreary moor received us, in which none but the moſt wretched paths were to be found, and we got involved among ſwamps more formidable than the ruggedeſt of the hills. At times the ſurface bent and waved under our feet, while the preſſure made the water from beneath ſpring up in ſmall ſtreams round every ſtep. This progreſs was attended

DUN DORNADILLA.

attended with the perpetual dread of ſinking in the quagmire. One of the ponies plunged, and was with difficulty extricated. The banks of ruſhes were our greateſt comforters; their matted roots made the ſurface firm; where they were diſtant, the paſſing over the moraſs became truly alarming. I thought we ſhould have been ſwallowed up. Far beyond the ſight of habitation, but thoſe of eagles; or of inhabitant, but wild-fowl; and involved in theſe horrid ſwamps, I ſhuddered at the raſh procedure; even to ſee the halls of *Fingal*, or of higher chiefs than him! nor knew the premium that would have made me return by the ſame way again.

After about an hour we got through the marſh, and advanced over a riſing ground, which gave a firmer path; and coming to the brow of a hill, which terminates the declivity of *Ben-hope*, and forms on this ſide the boundary of *Strathmore*—had the pleaſure of looking down on

DUN-DORNADILLA*,

and forgot the fatigues of the day. This venerable ruin dignifies the banks of a pleaſant river, which divides the dale. The verdure of the valley, not without riſing corn, became a chearing ſcene in ſo dreary a wilderneſs; a ſolitary hamlet near the beſt-cultivated ſpot, mingled a rural ſoftneſs with the vaſt wildneſs of the reſt of the proſpect. Projecting rocks, ſhagged with buſhes, and frowning with vaſt length of ſhadows along

* One of my views of this tower is engraven in the 5th volume of the *Archæologia*, tab. XVIII.

the ſides of the hills of immeaſurable extent, many caſcades in deep-worn channels, ruſhing down among them, murmur their wild muſic to the winds and the echoing rocks; for now no plaintive bard ſits liſtening "by the tree of the ruſtling leaf." Pictureſque and lofty mountains terminate the view; the head of one immenſely high in air, bending over its precipitous ſides, ſeems nodding to its fall, and threatens the dale with its ruins. On every hand the ſcenery is ſuch, as gives *Dun-Dornadilla* a ſituation diſtinguiſhedly romantic, magnificently wild.

FROM the anonymous account of the building, which is quoted in the *Voyage to the Hebrides*, I expected greater ſingularity in its ſtructure; but it uniformly correſponds with what remains of the other circular towers, which have been the caſtles of the chieftains in early ages. It bears a moſt remarkable reſemblance to thoſe in *Glenelg*, of which you have given ſuch accurate views, and ſo fully deſcribed in all its parts, as to render any further account almoſt unneceſſary. I ſhould not have ſaid ſo much, if it was not to vindicate you from a moſt groundleſs charge in a late publication. The peruſal of your deſcription * will be ſufficient evidence of my aſſertion.

I CANNOT ſee the ſmalleſt reaſon for ſuppoſing that ſuch edifices have been places of worſhip. They are with the utmoſt ingenuity contrived to prove ſecure and convenient dwellings. The inner wall of each ſeems uniformly perpendicular, ſo that

* Tour in *Scotl.* 1772, Part I. 2d. edit. p. 390, 391, 392, 393—alſo p. 250, and 336, in which the various kinds are fully deſcribed.

in

in theſe towers there remain no veſtiges of their having cloſed at the top, after the manner of the receſſes in the carns. But it is probable they may have had partial coverings of wood; the circles of ſtones, which project in ſome of them, at an equal height, all round the inſide of the building, may have been for reſting the ends of the beams upon. It is not an invincible argument againſt it, that the builders do not ſeem to have had hammers, or known the uſe of iron; for we find, that not only beams and planks can be cut, but compactly and firmly joined; and even rich carvings executed, without the aid of inſtruments of metal: of this the late voyages in the *South Seas* yield the moſt ſtriking evidence. But whatever floorings they may have had within the caſtles, they muſt not have extended over all the area of the building; for that would have rendered the halls dark and chearleſs; and as the apartments in the walls and paſſages are at preſent, with evident deſign, lighted by windows from within; that would have been a ſuperfluous care, if they had above entirely excluded the day *. Some of the ſquare openings, indeed, in the inner wall, as is juſtly obſerved by the anonymous writer, do not communicate either with the chambers or paſſages, but are a kind of beaufets; but ſure no one need perplex himſelf in conſulting what they were intended to hold; for ſuch are common in all old buildings;

* If we allow authenticity to *Oſſian*'s poems—the wind coming down in eddies through theſe openings, may have made the harps hung upon the wall produce a wild æolian tune, and utter thoſe alarming ſounds in the night, that ſupernatural muſic, to which they often refer.

and here perhaps have been enriched with drinking-ſhells and other ornamental utenſils, no leſs eſteemed in their day, than now the fineſt porcelain or vaſes of gold.

The argument againſt *Dun-Dornadilla*'s having been a fortreſs, becauſe it is commanded by a neighbouring hill, is not valid. Arrows from the adjacent eminence could have no effect; and it is not ſo nigh, as that large ſtones could be thrown into the building, and none but thoſe of enormous ſize could poſſibly make any impreſſion. It appears to me placed in one of the beſt ſituations which the extenſive dale affords. 'Tis on a riſing ground, ſufficiently diſtant from the river not to be overflowed; and covered on the north by the hill, yet not ſo near as to ſuffer from an enemy on it.

This is by far the moſt entire circular tower that I have ſeen, and probably the moſt compleat of the kind now extant: ſo remotely ſituated from the dwellings of men, it ſeems only to have ſuffered from the hand of time. I obſerved ſeveral nearer the coaſt, in *Strathnaver*, but they were completely ruined, having afforded materials for other adjacent buildings. This is ſaid to be but ſeven miles from the north ſhore, but it is a long half-day's journey from the head of the firth of *Tongue*: the dale, a few miles down, opens into *Loch-eribol*, a very noble, ſafe, and extenſive harbour; perhaps yielding in excellence only to *Cromarty-bay*, of any road in *Scotland*.

The higheſt parts of the walls of *Dun-Dornadilla*, are not thirty feet, but muſt have been much more; for the door, which like that of the one in *Sutherland*, has been at leaſt ſix feet high, is at preſent one half of its height choaked up with rubbiſh fallen

fallen from the top. The building is near fifty yards in circumference. The inner area twenty-ſeven feet diameter. There are three diſtinct rows of apartments, and paſſages, within the wall: I walked up and down different ſtairs from the firſt to the ſecond ſtory, but thoſe to the third ſeemed too confined, probably owing to many of the ſtones being diſplaced or fallen in.

THIS place takes its name from a monarch, on whom our early hiſtorians have beſtowed that of *Dornadilla*. He was, ſay they, a great hunter; firſt eſtabliſhed laws of the chace *; reigned twenty-eight years in peace and plenty, and died *only* two hundred and thirty-three years before CHRIST †.

THIS valley, called *Strath-more* from its ſize, is alſo called *Strath-Arindal* ‡. Biſhop *Stillingfleet* endeavours to evince that *Arindal*, the name of the ſtrath, and *Dornadil*, the title of the tower, are eſſentially the ſame, and have reference to the eminent warrior who reſided in the dale and built the tower.

THERE is alſo a fragment of a very old *Erſe* poem, to the ſame import, ſtill repeated in theſe parts. In this, *Dun-Dornadilla* is celebrated in a manner ſomewhat ſimilar to what you have quoted with reſpect to *Caiſtcal Teilbah* §.

Dun Dornghil, mac Duiff, er antaobh ri meira do'ſtrha
Seacht mile, O muir, ans an rod a racha na fir do Gholl'n.

The general import of which, I am informed, may be gathered from the following lines:

* *Boet.* lib. ii. 16. † *Leſley* de *Geſt. Scotl.* 82. ‡ Orig. Brit. Pre.
§ Voyage to the *Hebrides*.

Seven

Seven miles from ocean, in the chearful dale,
Baſks the large tower where *Dornadilla* reigns:
From thence, when war or civil feuds prevail,
The warriors pour into the *Caithneſs* plains.

These traditional lines prove the uſe of the buildings: the numbers * and the contiguity of them in all parts of the north, as well as the iſles, ſufficiently ſhew that they were not deſigned for temples. There muſt have been more temples than houſes, or elſe theſe parts muſt have been a nation of prieſts. I will not admit the argument drawn from their being ſituated always near to water †, becauſe water is generally allowed to be full as requiſite for œconomical as for religious purpoſes. Neither will I allow that their circular form ‡ gives them any better pretences to that ſacred title. The circles for that purpoſe were formed of large upright ſtones placed equidiſtant. They are more or leſs numerous, or conſiſt of a greater or fewer number of circles §, from the ſingle circle to the more compleat arch-temple of *Stonehenge*. Such might be the horrid circle of *Brumo* ‖, if the name ever exiſted but in *Oſſian*, for there are multitudes of that kind in *Scandinavia* **; and others incloſing remains of heroes ††. You yourſelf have by no means neglected enquiry ‡‡ after the former ſpecies of building, and found one inſtance now exiſting in *Norway*: and you have alſo quoted to

* *Archælogia*, V. 252. † The ſame, 253. ‡ The ſame, 252. § See this exemplified in *Mona Antiqua* paſſim. *Borlaſe* Antiq. *Cornwall*, 183, &c. tab. xiii. xiv. ‖ *Archælogia*, V. 252. ** *Dalhberg*, lib. III. tab. 280. †† *Dalhberg*, III. 315. *Worm.* Mon. *Dan.* 63. ‡‡ Tour in *Scotl.* 1772, Part I. 336.

me

me another greatly reſembling them, engraven in *Dalhberg's Suecia Antiqua & Hodierna.* You likewiſe ſuſpect a third (engraven in the ſame work) to be referred to this claſs of buildings; and in all the three inſtances they are called towers or forts, and not temples. Theſe likewiſe direct us to the nation from which they took their origin *.

From this ſtrath weſtward, the mountains ſtretch up into the monſtrous cliffs of *Edrahills:* into the deep receſſes of that *Alpine* region nature ſeems to have forbid all acceſs. If the way is forced a little into ſome rugged dale, the traveller is ſurrounded with a ſtupendous incloſure of rock—and the overhanging precipices of craggy hills, towering on all ſides immenſe, baffle perſeverance. Its internal ſcenery remains yet unexplored. We turned ſouthward up *Strathmore,* and on climbing the neighbouring height, found a plain of many miles lie before us, ſtretching between the declivities of the hills. Large ſpaces of the country there are flat, with much good paſture in them, but the ground often very rough and ſcraggy, interſperſed with pools. Theſe extenſive fields ſeem to be what is laid down in our maps as

DIRRY-MORE FOREST;

But at preſent there is ſcarce the veſtige of a tree diſcoverable in it.

In paſſing through this more level tract, numerous herds of cattle came in view: near to one of the graſſy fields where they

* *Dahlberg,* lib. II. tab. lxiv.

were

were feeding, was reared the keeper's booth, the moſt wretched hovel imaginable; with difficulty to be crawled into, and one could not ſtand upright when within; it ſeemed the more comfortleſs and forlorn, on account of its diſtance from any other human habitation. Yet here was ſtraw for a bed, a bottle of milk, and ſome pieces of bread. It is poſſible men may be contented with ſuch ſpare accommodation, with ſuch hard and ſcanty fare. I ſtrove in that cot to find ſhelter from a heavy rain, but ſoon found ſuch confinement ſeem worſe than an open expoſure to the ſevereſt weather.

These paſture-grounds are bounded on the eaſt by an exceeding rough moſs, ſtretching far along an extenſive lake, called *Loch-loyal*. There the coarſe heath, arrived at the ſtate of ſhrubs, made the paths difficult and unpleaſant; the moſs alſo, being interſected with deep ſloughs, and in many places moraſſy, it was judged expedient to go ſtrait to the lake; and its beach afforded a more eligible path, although covered with very large rough ſtones. Several iſlands in the lake, of far ſuperior verdure to the fields on its banks, enliven the large expanſe of water, which ſtretching ſeveral miles, far as the eye could follow it, was loſt among the northern mountains.

Several miles to the ſouth-eaſt, ſpreads *Loch-Naver*, a fine piece of water, ſix or eight miles long; a river running from it communicates with the ſea at the bay of *Far*, and brings ſalmon up to the banks of the loch: the lofty hill of *Cliberg* gradually riſing from the weſt-ſide of the lake, enriches and protects the neighbouring ſoil. *Cliberg* has much good paſture on it; round its ſides are ſcattered foreſts of birch and hazel, which yield

cover for deer, and goats and roes. It formerly abounded with firs, but they are now only diſcoverable by their withered remains in the ſoil. The more level parts of the hill are occupied by herds and flocks, belonging to ſome farms which enrich the banks of the loch. This ſeems one of the moſt pleaſing parts of *Strath-naver*. The ſouth-weſt end of the loch comes within a few miles of

MOAS-DALE,

a village ſituated on a fine level field, watered by a ſmall river, which ſpreads into ſeveral branches, and prettily divides the plain: the graſſy turf along the banks is ſmooth, even, and luxuriant; the ſoil of the adjacent arable grounds ſeems naturally rich and fertile, and their agriculture attended with neither much trouble nor care.

The inn where we are to ſleep, is ſupplied with all neceſſary articles of refreſhment; they are ſoon to have even a feather bed, for the accommodation of travellers: but I muſt ſleep on heath, and the good woman tells me, "my ſleep ſhall be ſweet," for the ruſhes that form the pillow were pulled with her own hand, at ſun-ſet, freſh from the bog.

June 29th. The heath-bed has met with various approbation. *Buchanan* * gives a good account of it. "They place the roots "downward, and the bruſh upward in ſo artful a manner, that "one ſleeps upon them ſoftly as on down:" and deſcribes the

* Hiſt. lib. I.

qualities of heath to be ſuch as are powerful to give ſtrength and freſh vigour to the nerves, ſo " that they who lie down at " night faint and weary, riſe in the morning active and lively." *Smollet* ſupports the ſame idea— " * The layer of heath was not " only ſoft and elaſtic, but the plant being in flower, diffuſed " an agreeable fragrance, which is wonderfully refreſhing and " reſtorative." There is reaſon to ſuſpect the validity of theſe remarks. Fatigue will lead to ſound repoſe: fortunate hardineſs of conſtitution, improved by exerciſe and toil, reconciles one to any place of reſt; but the heath-bed is far from pleaſant or eaſy. I felt, however, laſt night, an additional inconvenience; the bed prepared for me was near the fire-place, conſequently almoſt under that opening in the roof which anſwers both for the window and the chimney: it rained, and the drift was blown plentifully in upon it; and I was ſurprized, in the morning, to find the mountains white with a new fall of ſnow: it was a mid-ſummer treat I little looked for. The wind coming down from the hills, ſtill bearing the ſleet along, made the air intenſely cold, and piercing as in the dead of winter.

On leaving *Mouas-dale*, we had again to ſeek our way through the moſt diſagreeable moors, chilled with the northern blaſts, and often wading on a moſt uncertain bottom. After wandering over one dreary hill, found ſome miles of good road, upon the banks of a rivulet. The next hill, about nine miles from *Mouas-dale*, is rocky, and almoſt deſtitute of ſoil. On the top of it, there is a pyramid of rough ſtones, raiſed as a monu-

* Exped. Hum. Clink.

ment

ment of the half-way ſtage to *Larg*. Here it is uſual for travellers to reſt a while; but the badneſs of the day, and the wind and rain, induced us to puſh on. The day cleared up as we went down into the neighbouring dale, and we found better accommodation in a leſs inclement ſky. A very rural banqueting-houſe is conſtructed in the middle of a green, and called

LORD REAY'S TABLE.

A ſmooth plot of fine graſs is nearly encircled by the rivulet, in the center of it is raiſed a ſquare mound of earth and ſtones well covered with turf; a ſofa of the ſame materials is very dexterouſly carried round at a ſuitable diſtance from the table, part of one end is more particularly formed into the ſhape of a large chair, and has been, evidently, intended for a ſeat of diſtinction. But the whole is ſo entire, and in ſuch good repair, as to lay no claim to any thing of remote antiquity. I ſuppoſe it may have been built this century, for the accommodation of lord *Reay*'s family, when, viſiting the ſouth, they travel to and from their ſeat at *Tongue*. Here we ſpread our viands, and reſted an hour: the ponies found excellent paſture on the banks of the ſtream around us.

For eight or ten miles thence, found the country leſs rough and hilly; and if properly drained, many of the fields would amply repay the expence of cultivation. The bottoms through which the rivulets run, are often an extenſive level, and generally of a very freſh verdure. They might comfortably ſupport a number of inhabitants; and it is to be regretted, that the proprietors pay no more attention to the peopling of them. To

the greateſt part of *Strathnaver*, however, that obſervation will by no means apply. As far as I could judge, it is no ſurprize that the more mountainous regions ſhould be left waſte and deſolate. Theſe horrid wilds, in the heights, are too rugged and ſtubborn, to indemnify the toils of agriculture: and in the hollows between the hills, the ſwamps are too deep and inacceſſible, almoſt ever to give place to the dwellings of men. Without much ſpirit of prophecy, one may affirm, that theſe deſert tracts will remain uncultivated for ages; that rocky wilderneſs be for ever forlorn. Nothing but earthquakes or volcanos can ever render them habitable.

I LOOK back with pleaſure to thoſe lofty mountains, leſſening and receding from the eye, am ſatisfied to have wandered ſo long amidſt theſe wilds; they have left impreſſions on my mind that will not be eaſily effaced: but muſt rejoice that I now can turn to more enlivening proſpects. The finely-wooded banks of *Loch-ſhin* are in view, with the church and village of *Larg*. From thence, I learn, there are good made roads; a moſt agreeable circumſtance, that has been wanting for near a hundred miles, and conſiderably embarraſſed the travelling.

I AM convinced the interior parts of this country are very inaccurately laid down in the maps of *Scotland*, and the names of places are often either altogether wanting, or at an amazing diſtance from where they ought to be. I had *Dorret*'s map along with me, and found much pleaſure in its accuracy, ſo far as I applied to it for aſcertaining any diſtances along the eaſt and north ſhores. There they ſeem marked with ſuch fidelity, that one could fix the time of reaching any particular place.

But

But here, for inſtance, the diſtance from *Mouas-dale* to the kirk of *Larg*, meaſures on the map but four or five miles, yet they are computed eighteen, and the travelling of them has taken up the greateſt part of a day.

LOCH-SHIN

is a charming piece of water, of great extent, winding among the hills; the woods frequently ſtretching down to the water's-edge. One cannot command but a view of a few miles of it at a time: it is ſaid to be twenty in length. Near to the kirk of *Larg*, the ſouth-eaſt end of *Loch-ſhin* falls down in broad caſcades on each ſide of a ſmall iſland; and being ſoon after confined into a narrow channel, forms a river of the ſame name, which pouring along with conſiderable rapidity, winds its way towards the firth of *Dornoch*. The river

SHIN,

ſoon after quitting the loch, increaſes its violence amidſt precipitous banks, and roars beneath the ſhade of overhanging woods. Within about two or three miles of the place where it falls into the firth, it forms a noble and weighty cataract, by tumbling over a great ridge of rock which runs acroſs its courſe. The bellowing of the fall is heard long ere it appear in view. The way is intricate, through a birch wood, full of rocks and briers. One can proceed but ſlowly, and muſt be directed by the noiſe: That vaſt caſcade muſt be but ſeldom viſited; for no path is found among the trees. The torrent hurls over a precipice of prodigious height, and the rock is excavated underneath

neath the fall, ſo that a large void is left within. The whole river impetuouſly precipitated from above, thrown over to a great diſtance from the foot of the rock, ſuch an ample ſpace is left in a manner dry within the cataract, that, as I was informed, ſome have been bold enough to venture in and walk between the torrent and the rock; but it did not appear to me practicable, without the greateſt danger.

From the ferry at *Inver-ſhin*, the

FIRTH OF DORNOCH

preſents a pleaſant proſpect: the rich banks of the firth, crowded with farms, and animated with all the appearances of induſtry; ſmall veſſels ſailing up and down; people buſy preparing for loading and unloading them; fiſhermen attending their nets; the ferry-boats ready at a call; the extenſive proſpect of the rich lands in *Roſs-ſhire*; and a good inn ſeen among trees on the oppoſite ſhore. All this was not only comfortable, as promiſing better accommodation; but yielded a variety of reflection, as of ſcenery highly delightful and entertaining, when compared with that ſtagnation and blank in life, which regions void of inhabitants exhibit to the mind.

June 30th. Stopped at *Dun-aliſhaig*, on the ſouth banks of the firth: it is a round tower, alluded to by Mr. *Gordon*. A good deſcription is given by Mr. *Maitland**, in the laſt volume of the *Archæologia*, briefly repeated by Mr. *Anderſon*. It

* Hiſt. *Scotl.* I. 145.

has

PLAN & SECTION OF DUNALISHAIG.

has been a very ſumptuous edifice of the kind. The wall is twelve feet thick. There are four chambers in it on the ground-floor, with narrow paſſages of communication: about nine feet from the ground, a circle of ſtones projects, broad enough to walk round the inſide of the building. One ſtep up from theſe, four doors open to the apartments of the ſecond ſtory, which have alſo a communication, by means of narrow ſtair-caſes, with ſome of the chambers below. The area of the court or hall within, is twenty-ſeven feet diameter. No part of the wall in this caſtle, is now above ſixteen feet high. The neighbouring inhabitants ſaid it was the tower of *Fingal*, and recorded the prodigies of his ſtrength. I beg the favour of you to cauſe to be engraven the exact plan of the firſt floor, and a ſection of the chambers in both ſtories, which I now incloſe. It ſupplies the omiſſions in the print given in the *Archælogia* *.

Between *Dun-aliſhaig* and *Tain*, there are ſeveral monumental ſtones. Seven of them are remarkably diſtinguiſhed in the traditions of the country, and are ſaid to be erected over the graves of ſeven *Norwegian* princes: they had ſought alliance with the *Caledonian* chiefs, married in their families, and ſettled among them; but were cut off in civil feuds, which aroſe from their interfering intereſts and claims. The obeliſks alluded to have, however, been erected at very different æras. One at *Cariblair* ſeems to be of great antiquity; it is placed on a circular mount formed by art; is a rude ſtone of about twelve feet high; inſcribed on it are ſome mathematical figures, and

* *Archælogia*, V. tab.

a fiſh above. Another at *Edwardton* (a pleaſant village) exhibits a horſe and his rider in well-executed bas-relief; on a circle above is raiſed an elegant croſs. This laſt I therefore apprehend to be of far the moſt modern date.

From *Edwardton*, a ride of half a dozen miles brought me to *Tain*, where, the circle of *Caithneſs*, *Sutherland*, and *Strathnaver* being completed, I conſidered my ſtudies as at an end; and being furniſhed with better horſes, haſted home with all poſſible expedition.

Crossed the firth of *Cromarty*, at the town, which lies under the ſouth promontory: an extenſive rope-work and brewery are new eſtabliſhments at the place, and ſucceeding well. On the head-land, which covers the bay, there are ſome well-grown woods; through theſe Mr. *Roſs*, who has an elegant ſeat at a little diſtance from the town, has cut ſome charming walks, from which there is variety of very grand and delightful proſpects; on one hand, of the rugged cliffs along the ſea-ſhore; on the other, of the rich banks of the firth, ſtretching all the way to *Dingwall*.

From *Cromarty* it is but a ſhort ſtage to the ferry at *Arderſier*; and while the boat was getting ready, I took the incloſed ſketch of *Fort-George*, a modern fortification, founded after the year 1745, to ſecure a paſſage into the firth of *Inverneſs*, and to form a *place d'armes* in caſe of any future rebellion. The expence was immenſe; and by the change of events ſince that time, it appears a mere uſeleſs memorial of the ſtate of that turbulent period.

NEW FORT GEORGE

INTRODUCTION

TO THE

EXTRACTS FROM TORFÆUS.

THE more antient annals of *Caithneſs*, *Sutherland*, and *Strathnaver*, ſeem in a great meaſure to have been altogether uncanvaſſed by *Scotch* hiſtorians. The record of events that occurred at a great diſtance from the ſeat of government, and on that account the leſs intereſting to the crown, and but of little moment to the policy of the kingdom, has been left entirely neglected—though from their novelty, variety, and importance, many of theſe occurrences, related by *Torfæus*, might prove entertaining embelliſhments to a hiſtory of *Scotland*. The original records of theſe events, their not being extant in the country itſelf, has probably been another circumſtance, which contributed to that univerſal ſilence, obſerved by our hiſtorians with reſpect to the ſtrange revolutions, which took place in theſe northern counties.

WRITING does not ſeem to have been practiſed by any native of the north of *Scotland*, previous to that knowledge of letters which advanced along with *Chriſtianity*: and the light of the true

religion had not dawned on *Caithneſs* in the tenth century. Any authentic memoirs of this country, therefore, in the earlier ages, can only be gleaned from the written teſtimonies preſerved in *Norway*, of the tranſactions of that nation with the inhabitants of theſe territories: and the intricacy of that reſearch, together with the few intereſting events that occur, amidſt the tedious detail of many particular circumſtances, has made the little knowledge that may be had of the hiſtory of the north, to be left in the greater obſcurity.

The ſituation of theſe counties is likewiſe ſuch as ſeems long to have prevented any free communication with the ſouth of *Scotland*, or even with the neighbouring ſhires of *Roſs* or *Inverneſs*. As an evidence of this, it may be remarked, that although *Adamnan*, abbot of *Jona*, ſays, that St. *Columba* was well received in the north of *Scotland*, in the middle of the ſixth century; and that *Brudius*, king of the *Picts*, who had a royal ſeat at *Inverneſs*, was by him converted to Chriſtianity; yet he mentions *Columba*'s croſſing over to the oppoſite ſide of *Loch-neſs*, as the moſt daring effort of his zeal. But whatever difficulties there may have been to encounter in *Roſs-ſhire*, ariſing from the different manners of the tribes, or from their oppoſing intereſts; all theſe are ſtrengthened by an additional barrier, which might have ever prevented the *Keldeis* from gaining acceſs into *Caithneſs*. That vaſt range of mountains which pervades *Sutherland*, and terminates in the immenſe promontory of the *Ord*, extends alſo to the weſtern ſhore. This mountainous tract, defended by the rough inhabitants, jealous of any encroachments from ſtrangers, ſeems to have been an inſuperable bar to knowledge making any

ſucceſsful advances in that line. We therefore find, that the northern extremities of the iſland did not receive the light of Chriſtianity, nor the knowledge of letters, by any gradual advances from the ſouth; but they were communicated from *Norway*, during the expeditions undertaken by that nation (in the end of the tenth or beginning of the eleventh century) to make ſettlements in the *Orkney* iſlands, and on the coaſt of *Caithneſs*. As therefore the *Picts*, and *Caledonians* of theſe parts, could at that period have no written hiſtory of their own, if we wiſh to learn any thing certain of them, it muſt be gathered from *Torfæus*. His compilation ſeems to have comprehended every material piece of information extant in his time *.

To many anecdotes he, no doubt, gave place, that were ſupported only by the general authority of oral traditions. By numbers who returned to *Norway*, after having been perſonally engaged in the tranſactions on the coaſt of *Caithneſs*, the particulars of their expeditions, and the ſtate of the country would be frequently repeated; and their concurring teſtimonies ſufficient to eſtabliſh a general narrative. But the chiefs and commanders from *Norway*, were alſo accompanied by bards, choſen on purpoſe to celebrate their fortunes and the ſucceſs of their arms.

* *Thormodus Torfæus* was a native of *Iceland*, patronized, on account of his great abilities, by *Frederic* III. king of *Denmark*, by whom he was extremely beloved. His ſon, *Chriſtian* V. appointed him his hiſtorian for the kingdom of *Norway*, with a conſiderable penſion; which was continued to him by *Frederic* IV. His great learning, his aſſiduity, and his ſkill in his native language, enabled him to diſcharge his poſt with the utmoſt credit to himſelf, and advantage to the public. He died about the year 1720, aged 81.

Their ſongs came in time to be penned, and received as the moſt authentic repoſitories of hiſtorical facts. And much of *Torfæus* reſts on their validity.—He had, however, the aid of much more convincing memorials. When the ſtate of theſe provinces became more intereſting to the crown of *Norway*, an hiſtoriographer was appointed to reſide in the iſland of *Flota*, on purpoſe to collect and record ſuch tranſactions, and other pieces of information with reſpect to the north of *Scotland*, as might be deemed worthy of notice, or of importance to their future enterprizes. Theſe narrations compoſe a diffuſe voluminous work, called *Codex Floteiences*; and to this *Torfæus* is indebted for the moſt important part of his hiſtory.

That compilation is therefore probably the beſt, and only authentic record, of tranſactions in the north that is now to be found, and all without their reach, ſeems concealed by one general veil, within which no feature of truth can be diſcerned.

Tacitus indeed, in the life of *Julius Agricola*, mentions, that ere the end of the firſt century, the *Roman* fleet had ſailed round the north of *Scotland*, that they landed on ſome of the *Orcades* to refreſh; and ſaw *Ultima Thule* white with ſnow; perhaps the diſtant mountains of *Shetland*, probably the iſle of *Foula*, from which the word *Thule* might have been readily formed. But this is all that can be learned from the *Roman* writers. They give no account of the condition or manners of the inhabitants of theſe northern regions, though they evidently allude to their being peopled. From that early period a number of ages elapſed, and theſe countries may have undergone numberleſs revolutions;

all probability was, that the *Picts* were drove from their native poſſeſſions, and compelled to ſeek for ſhelter and ſafety upon foreign ſhores. Previous to this period, they had frequent communication with the *Orkney* iſlands, thence naturally ſought their firſt aſylum there; but whatever they might relate to the iſlanders, concerning the poſſibility of recovering their poſſeſſions, or by whatever inducements ſolicit their aid; it is probable the ſcattered and independent ſtate of the chiefs and commanders there, would prove unfavourable to any propoſal for retrieving the fortunes of their ſuppliants. They delighted in piracy and depredation, were inured to enterprize and conflict, and would warm with the hope of plunder; but had no union of force ſufficient to promiſe them ſucceſs, ſhould they attempt to invade the coaſt of *Scotland*, defended by theſe reſolute warriors, who had expelled the *Pictiſh* nation. It appears, that therefore many of the exiles migrated from the *Orcades* to *Shetland*, and thence to the oppoſite coaſts of *Norway*. There a more attentive ear was lent to their ſtory; it became a momentous ſubject to that enterprizing nation. The *Picts* would very naturally give the moſt favourable repreſentations of the fertility of the north of *Scotland*. The remembrance of their native poſſeſſions, "the pleaſant fields they had left," would be peculiarly grateful to them in a foreign land: they would deſcribe the luxuriancy of their inheritances in the faireſt lights: and their report made its way to the throne.

Harold, an aſpiring and reſolute monarch, warmly eſpouſed the cauſe of the exiles; he ſaw that the expedition promiſed new ſettlements to his favourites, gave his officers new commands,

mands, and would ſtrengthen and extend his influence and his power. Confederate princes and chieftains, under the king, accuſtomed to follow the ſchemes of his ambition, ſaw in this the aggrandizement of their families, and eagerly cloſed with the propoſal of aſſiſting the *Picts* to recover their loſt dominion. Many indigent adventurers were delighted with the enterprize, and a grand expedition took place; their numbers were encreaſed at *Shetland* and in the *Orcades*. Beſides finding many of the exile *Picts* there ready to join the armament, the naval commanders had probably learned from experience, that it was their intereſt not to oppoſe, but to ſecond the enterprizes of the *Norwegians*; and, being accuſtomed to piracy and depredation, were led by an eaſy tranſition to join the ſquadron with their veſſels, on what ſeemed at leaſt a more honourable kind of adventure. All theſe acting together in combination, and united under the command of one leader, their force became ſuperior to every oppoſition: for, whether it was owing to the *Picts* being now ſupported by the diſcipline and arms of their allies, or that the *Catie* being ſatiated with the ſpoil of the plains, choſe to retire to their native mountains, cannot be aſcertained; but a ſucceſsful deſcent was made by the armament upon the north of *Scotland*, colonies were eſtabliſhed all along the coaſts of *Caithneſs*, and it became a *Norwegian* province. This event is what introduces the ſubject of the following annals.

EXTRACTS

EXTRACTS FROM TORFÆUS.

SECTION I.

Cir. Annum 850.

SIGURDUS, ſon to *Ronald*, a powerful nobleman, obtained the chief command of the ſquadron and forces deſtined for the re-eſtabliſhment of the *Picts*, and ſettling colonies in the north of *Scotland*, which ſhould own allegiance to the crown of *Norway*. Theſe ends were ſoon, in all appearance, ſo fully accompliſhed, and the enterprize crowned in *Caithneſs* with ſuch favourable ſucceſs, that *Sigurdus* was ambitious to viſit other provinces, and make ſettlements there alſo.

The diſtant hills, on the oppoſite coaſt of the firth of *Moray*, are ſometimes viſible from the *Caithneſs* ſhore. This circumſtance gave riſe to another expedition. *Sigurdus* equipped a number of veſſels, and landing in *Moray*, built the fort of *Burgh-head*. Here he met with a very different reception: and, in a conflict with ſome of the clans of *Caledonians* that defended their country, he was mortally wounded, and left his brother *Haladus* to ſucceed him in the command. He was timid, irreſolute, and indolent. During the eſtabliſhment of the colony in *Moray*, and while many of the moſt daring officers were there, the influence and authority of the *Norſe* commanders became daily weaker; and now the chieftains in *Caithneſs*, in a great meaſure, recovered their antient independence; they acknowledged no ſuperior in the perſon of *Haladus*; and the buccaneers from the *Orkney* iſlands uſed great freedoms with his ſhips

ſhips and ſtores. Finding himſelf thus ſurrounded by intrepid chieftains and daring freebooters, he choſe rather to conſult his own perſonal ſafety, by relinquiſhing his ſtation, than encounter the trouble of eſtabliſhing ſubordination in *Caithneſs*; he therefore returned to *Norway*, led a private life, and ſunk into oblivion.

RONALD juſtly conſidered *Haladus*'s conduct, as what entailed diſhonour on his family, which had been choſen to preſide over theſe provinces; and in order, as ſoon as poſſible, to wipe off the ſtain, he called his other ſons before him, and demanded whether any of them choſe to be appointed to that ſtation which *Haladus* had relinquiſhed; on the terms of undertaking to clear the ſeas of pirates, to chaſtiſe the unruly chieftains, and encounter all the difficulties of eſtabliſhing more perfect order and tranquillity on theſe ſhores.

EINAR, a bold and reſolute character, a man of penetration and prudence, accepted the charge; and, on his father's application to *Harold*, was created an earl. He ſailed from *Norway*, with a conſiderable band of choſen men, in a galley of twenty oars. And although he could not doubt, but that there were numbers of his countrymen in *Caithneſs* ready to ſupport his authority, yet he approached with caution, came to the chieftains with terms of alliance and friendſhip, and formed ſuch connections among them, as happily prevented all rivalſhip for power; he gained their affections, and became ſupreme arbiter among them.

BY theſe means he firmly eſtabliſhed himſelf in the government; and, keeping a ſtrong armament at ſea, and a number of

warlike followers, awed the diſturbers of peace, and adminiſtered equity; and enjoyed a temporary quiet in the honourable ſtation to which he was advanced.

But the ſons of *Harold*, king of *Norway*, learning the ſplendid and happy ſtate in which *Einar* lived, in theſe new territories, began to repine, that any but thoſe of royal blood ſhould have been inveſted with ſuch a high command; and, unknown to the king, entered into a conſpiracy to deprive the family of *Ronald* of their influence and honours. *Haldanus*, who took the lead in the exploit, having ſeduced ſeveral of the commanders of the royal fleet to ſecond his views, ſailed with a ſmall ſquadron, and ſurprized *Einar* in the *Orcades*.

Einar, unſuſpicious of any attack from *Norway*, and finding himſelf otherwiſe eaſy and ſecure, was not prepared to repel ſuch an invader; he therefore declined all conteſt, and privately retired into *Caithneſs*, leaving *Haldanus* to enjoy the moſt flattering proſpect of the ſucceſs of his deſign. And though he perceived that, under the title of heir to the crown of *Norway*, he might ſoon altogether undermine his influence, and blaſt the laurels which he had been ſo ſtudious to obtain: yet he alſo truſted, that the other commanders, if deprived of that daring prince their leader, would ſoon ſubmit to his authority. He therefore made no reſiſtance in open war, but accompliſhed his views by ſtratagem. He kept a watchful eye over *Haldanus*; and, learning that he had ſeparated from his forces, and gone to viſit a detached iſland, he prepared a choſen band for the exploit, and conſulted his expedition to take place in the dead of night. In conſequence of the precautions he had taken, *Haldanus*'s retreat was cut off, and

and all communication with his officers and adherents on the other iſlands prevented.

THUS the prince of *Norway* was made captive; and nothing but his blood could expiate his crime in *Einar*'s ſight. With horrible ſolemnity, a ſacrifice was prepared, and *Haldanus*, the deſtined victim, was made an offering to *Odin* *: and upon his remains a tumulus of ſtones was raiſed, to perpetuate the memory of the event.

WHEN intelligence of this unfortunate adventure of *Haldanus* had reached the court of *Norway*, *Harold*, grieved and enraged at ſuch an inſtance of cruelty committed on his ſon, and conſidering it as an ignominy done to his family, by one whom he had loaded with honours, he came in perſon to *Orkney* with a conſiderable armament, on purpoſe to chaſtiſe *Einar* for his ingratitude. 893.

EINAR dreaded his reſentment: and, warned of his approach, ſtrengthened himſelf in *Caithneſs*, making every hoſtile preparation to repel his attacks. By the connections that he had formed, and the alliances which he had made with the families of rank, he had become ſo reſpected and eſteemed, that they conſidered his intereſt and honour as their own; and united to defend his cauſe againſt the king of *Norway*.

HAROLD landed in the *Orcades* without oppoſition; but learned there, that *Einar* could give a moſt formidable reſiſtance to any force that attempted to invade the coaſts of *Caithneſs*: finding, therefore, that it would not be eaſily in his power to inflict that

* The *Scandinavian* divinity.

exemplary puniſhment which he thought *Einar* deſerving of, he dropped his deſign, and offered terms of accommodation. By theſe *Einar* being preſented with the proſpect of retaining his government in quiet, yielded to a demand from *Harold*, of ſixty merks of gold, to be paid as an acknowledgment of his crime, and the dependance of his ſtate upon the crown of *Norway*. *Harold* having levied the fine, ſailed on other exploits to the ſouth of *Scotland*.

EINAR now reſumed his adminiſtration, and being relieved from the apprehenſion of any further diſturbance from abroad, exerciſed all his intrepidity and prudence in enforcing laws of juſtice and equity, to preſerve the internal tranquillity of the country. It is ſaid he had the happineſs of ſeeing the good effects of his political regulations appear, in the better accommodation of the inhabitants, the induſtry of their rural applications, and in the culture and improvement of the finer arts, which only take place when people are eaſy and ſecure. He ſpent the remainder of his years in peace, and died in a good old age, leaving a ſon, named *Torphinus*, to ſucceed him.

SECTION II.

920. DURING the life of *Torphinus*, it appears that the *Orcades* were frequently ſubject to depredations from the *Scandinavian* adventurers; and the princes of *Norway* frequently laid the inhabitants under tribute, as they went on expeditions to the *Weſtern iſles*: yet the coaſts of *Caithneſs* ſeem to have been preſerved

preſerved pretty free from the ravages of foreigners; and its tranquillity was but little diſturbed by inteſtine broils.

But the ſons of *Torphinus*, grand-children of *Einar*, were not equally fortunate with their fathers in conſulting the meaſures of quiet and peace: neither the ties of blood, nor the advantages that would have ariſen from their mutual friendſhip, could moderate the extravagance of their ambition, or bring their rivalſhip within any bounds of policy or diſcretion. They were numerous. The names of *Havard*, *Liotus*, *Scullius*, and *Lodver*, are remarkable in the ſtory of theſe times. 940.

Havard, heir to the earldom, is celebrated as the beſt of characters, and gained the title of The Happy. But *Raganilda*, a young lady whom he had married, became attached to *Liotus*, her brother-in-law, and they conſpired together againſt *Havard*, to take away his life; and, to guard againſt the ſuſpicion's falling on them alone, they engaged ſome vaſſals of the family to be their accomplices in the aſſaſſination. *Liotus* was brave and daring; but not having openly appeared acceſſary to the murder, he was, on receiving *Raganilda*'s hand, acknowledged ſucceſſor to the earldom; and, without further bloodſhed, quelled for a time all oppoſition to his claim.

But *Scullius*, his elder brother, viewing with indignation and intereſted envy the inſidious ſcheme, whereby *Liotus* had ſupplanted him, and unable to effect his reſentment by force of arms, reſolved to try the expedient of intereſting the crown of *Scotland* in his cauſe; and, by whatever means he had been enabled to judge ſo readily in this caſe, he was not diſappointed of his hope: for having equipped a few veſſels as for a cruize,

he ſailed ſouthward to ſeek for acceſs to the king: and gaining admittance to *Malcolm* I. beſought him to ſupport his cauſe, and aid him to obtain the poſſeſſion of his inheritance in the north.

Malcolm, perceiving that an alliance of friendſhip with one of chief authority in *Caithneſs*, might in many reſpects prove advantageous to his intereſts there, favoured *Scullius*'s wiſh, and ordered ſome veſſels with auxiliary forces to be ready to attend him on his return. And, that he might eſtabliſh the ſubordination of theſe northern provinces to the crown of *Scotland*, gave *Scullius* a charter containing a legal title to the earldom as part of his kingdom.

Scullius, thus countenanced by the throne, and inveſted with authority from government, returned into *Caithneſs* with conſiderable eclat.

His known right to the earldom, the apparent legality of the title conferred on him by the king, and above all, the forces by which he was accompanied, conſpired together to awe the vaſſals of *Liotus*, and numbers flocked to his ſtandard. At the time of his arrival in *Caithneſs*, however, *Liotus* was engaged in making ſome excurſions among the *Orkney* iſlands, and that circumſtance a good deal contributed to the favourable reception which he met with. But *Scullius*, elated with thoſe events, which ſo highly flattered his wiſhes, could not reſt ſatisfied with taking proper meaſures for the defence of *Caithneſs*, and ſecuring himſelf there; but, with the eccentric policy of the age, reſolved on attacking his brother in the iſles. Having therefore largely augmented his forces, and equipped an

additional

additional number of veſſels, he ſet ſail with the armament for the *Orcades*.

But *Liotus*, though ſeemingly inattentive, was not blind to his brother's motions, and was prepared to give him the ſevereſt oppoſition: he had put numbers of the iſlanders in arms, and taken ſuch precautions as he thought would prove moſt fatal to the deſigns of *Scullius*; yet on his approach to theſe ſhores, he offered ſome terms of accommodation: theſe, however, *Scullius* rejected, and made an unſucceſsful attempt to land. A number of his men were cut off, and ſome veſſels deſtroyed. Diſheartened with the fate of this event, he put to ſea with the remainder of the armament, and returned to *Caithneſs*.

Liotus, with all poſſible expedition, prepared to proſecute his ſucceſs; he gathered together all the forces which he could raiſe, manned a number of ſhips, and embarked with the reſolution of landing wherever *Scullius* ſhould be found. By the time *Liotus*'s fleet arrived on the coaſt, *Scullius* had entered into an alliance with *Magbragdus*, thane of *Sutherland*, who was come from *Dunrobin* with a conſiderable force, and encamped with his ally in the central dales of *Caithneſs*.

Liotus, however, advanced thither with his whole force. When the armies approached each other, he gave forth an order remarkable for thoſe times, when their conflicts in general were ſo raſhly violent. He charged his followers only to march on with intrepid coolneſs, and, whatever aſſaults might be made by the enemy, they were to ſtand firm and keep their ground on the defenſive only. This he did, that the ſtrength of their foes might be waſted in the attack, and his counſel ſucceeded according

cording to his wiſh. The enemy, impetuous and violent in their firſt aſſault, on finding the oppoſite battalions remain in firm and undiſturbed array, ſoon began to abate of their fruitleſs fury; and at length their ardour cooled into diſmay. When *Liotus* obſerved that the effects of their diſappointment began to be ſeriouſly felt, and that they heſitated about a retreat, he ordered his forces, in their turn, to pour their vengeance on the aſſailants: and they ruſhing on with freſh vigour, threw the foe into utter confuſion, and made them fly on every hand. *Scullius* fell while rallying a choſen band, and left the glory of the day to *Liotus*; yet he alſo was ſo deſperately wounded, that a few days put a period to his life. The field of battle was about a mile weſt from *Watten*; and is covered over with the rude monuments of ſuch an event. It is called "*Toftingale*," or "the grave of ſtrangers."

Lodver, brother to the fallen generals, became now of firſt authority in *Caithneſs*. He was of an enterprizing genius; and, finding no oppoſition to his power, and little opportunity of exerting his warlike ſpirit at home, ſpent the moſt of his time in expeditions to the *Weſtern iſles*, making depredations on theſe, and on the coaſts of *Ireland*. In one of theſe excurſions, he contracted an alliance with an *Iriſh* chieftain, called *Kiarval*, by marrying his daughter *Audna*. This lady ſeems to have been poſſeſſed of conſiderable abilities and addreſs. By *Audna* *Lodver* had a ſon, named *Sigurdis*, many circumſtances of whoſe life, became more memorable than any in that of his father. *Audna* was celebrated for her ſkill in curious arts, and obtained the reputation of being endowed with magical powers. She profited

of

of theſe on a very important occaſion. When *Sigurdis* came of age to take the field—(the honours of perſons of rank ſeem to have been all gathered in the military line)—*Audna* wove a ſtandard for her ſon: on this the black raven was ſo well repreſented, that it ſeemed floating on the winds, and ſoaring up to heaven; an emblem of that rapid and triumphant courſe wherein he would move to fame. Under the influence of this ſtandard, *Audna* told her ſon, "he would be proſperous in all his enterprizes, unconquerable and victorious in battle;" and, delivering it to *Sigurdis* under the ſolemn ſanction of a powerful charm, accompanied it with a becoming addreſs in the following very ſpirited and valiant terms: "Your life is moſt valuable to me; it has ever been the darling object of my care; herein I have exerted all my ſkill to render it long and fortunate.—But, ſince immortality is not the privilege of man in this world, and that the Fates, and not any dangers to which mortals are expoſed, determine the period of human life:—remember, that it is much more honourable that life ſhould be ended with renown in the exploits of war, than prolonged by inglorious inactivity and eaſe."

SIGURDIS, naturally ambitious to the higheſt degree, thus encouraged and inſpired, in a manner which had all the influence of a ſupernatural charm upon him, rivalled in bravery, as well as ſucceſs, the moſt renowned of his anceſtors. He was poſſeſſed of a penetrating judgment, great intrepidity of mind, an enlarged underſtanding, capable of forming the moſt extenſive plans of government; by theſe, at the head of a widely-ſcattered military force, he maintained deſpotic authority in the north, 990.

and preſerved a vaſt extent of territory ſubject to his cont rcu Poſſeſſing the entire dominion of the *Orcades*, and having the gallies of the naval chiefs there at command, he often pillaged the *Weſtern iſles*, and laid them under tribute. And, exerciſing all the powers of a monarch, in the north of *Scotland*, rendered the *Black Raven* formidable to the thanes of *Roſs-ſhire* and *Moray*, exerting the authority of a prince over them, and over many chieftains in *Argyleſhire*, in defiance of all the menaces of *Keneth* III. to whom they complained. Thus, for many years, *Sigurdis* flouriſhed in the north, maintaining unrivalled rank and power.

SECTION III.

1000. ABOUT this period Chriſtianity had dawned on *Scandinavia*, and became the eſtabliſhed religion in the ſeat of government in *Norway*. Its doctrines interwove themſelves with the policy of the nation: its principles, ſo nearly intereſting to human happineſs, made their farther publication an object of much moment to the adventurous princes, and gave a new law to their enterprizes. While the power of theſe principles was acting with original force upon the minds of the people, and their zeal rendered them ambitious of any exploit, whereby they could diffuſe their influence; *Olaus*, prince of *Norway*, equipped a ſquadron deſtined to carry the knowledge of the goſpel to other ſhores.

ON this pious adventure he was accompanied, not only by numbers of all ranks, whom, as uſual, a love of enterprize in-

vited; but by many perſons of diſtinguiſhed knowledge and abilities, men of ſincere piety, who had become particularly well acquainted with the Chriſtian doctrines, and entertained a deep ſenſe of their infinite importance.

These entered into the fleet, joyful in the proſpect of ſpreading the truths which they revered, through yet unenlightened countries; and the ſquadron ſoon appeared off the *Orcades*.

Sigurdis, in the courſe of his career of glory, was banqueting in the iſland of *South-Ronaldſha*. Confiding in the greatneſs of his fame, that no foreign power whatever would venture, in a hoſtile manner, to approach his coaſts; he beheld, without anxiety, the vaſt numbers of the fleet from *Norway*. *Olaus*, learning the eaſy unprepared ſituation of the earl, brought the ſquadron to anchor, in the harbour (now called *Saint Margaret's Hope)* where the veſſels attending on *Sigurdis* lay: and though he took every precaution to block up the port, ſent a friendly meſſage aſhore, begging of the earl to come to a conference aboard his ſhip. He, with ſuitable magnanimity, conſented; probably thinking it was to conſult on ſome adventure to the weſtern ſeas; and went accompanied only by *Kindius*, his ſon, and a few ſelect attendants.

Olaus, ſecure in the midſt of his numerous fleet, and thus with unlooked-for eaſe having got *Sigurdis* entirely in his power, opened his embaſſy in an amicable, but in a moſt deliberate and formidable manner; declaring, "that, as the heir of *Harold*, "he claimed the ſovereignty of all theſe provinces over which "*Sigurdis* had extended his ſway, and had brought a force ſuf-"ficient to ſupport his claim: that the life and fortunes of

" the earl were now at his diſpoſal.—But that it was ſo far from " his intention to take advantage of theſe circumſtances, to do " any thing prejudicial to *Sigurdis*, his intereſts, or honour, that " he declared he had intentionally come from *Norway*, to form " a new alliance with him—one of a ſuperior nature to what " he was yet acquainted with, upon the principles of a divine " revelation which they had received from heaven :" but, on purpoſe that he might the more ſeriouſly and devoutly accede to the terms of accommodation, it would become abſolutely neceſſary for him to abjure the religious ceremonies and the gods of his fathers.

SIGURDIS, although aſtoniſhed and confounded at ſuch an addreſs; though awed by his critical ſituation, wherein he ſaw the only means of preſerving his life and fortune, was to relinquiſh that worſhip which time immemorial had hallowed and eſtabliſhed ;—declared, with much firmneſs, that compliance with ſuch a demand, was what would require the utmoſt caution and deliberation : " for that he did not eſteem himſelf wiſer than his " fathers, who had uniformly venerated the tenets and rites of " that religion which he followed."

How far by this time the antient *Scandinavian* theology had been interwoven with that of the north of *Scotland*, cannot be eaſily aſcertained ; but the many remains of *Druid* temples extant in *Caithneſs*, leave little room to doubt of the general character of the religion which took place there in early periods. The pure principles of *Druidiſm* are memorable and valuable. A ſtate of immortality, and the rewards of virtue there; the ſuperintendence of one ſupreme and univerſal Providence, the protector

protector of the juſt, and puniſher of the perfidious; were tenets which gave dignity to their ſacred rites, and properly awed the minds of thoſe who were accuſtomed to attend the ſolemnities of that religion. Still may we hold theſe circles in ſome degree venerable; for there the paths of goodneſs were enlightened, and ſacrifices flamed in honour of the Supreme Being. From the *Sun*, the moſt glorious repreſentative of the divine benignity; from *thunder*, the moſt awful demonſtration of almighty power; and from *truth*, one of the moſt exalted attributes of intelligent being; they borrowed the phraſes which were uſed to adumbrate the Divinity: hence we form ſome idea of the nature of their worſhip.

SIGURDIS ſeems to have been ſo deeply impreſſed with a ſenſe of the truth and moment of the principles on which he had been accuſtomed to pay his devotions to Heaven, "that he "could not eaſily apprehend what authority *Olaus* could have "to abrogate the eſtabliſhed worſhip of the country, and deem "thoſe temples prophane, which, from the earlieſt ages, had "been conſecrated to ſacred uſe. He therefore begged of *Olaus* "that he might be well informed, how they came to be per-"ſuaded of the divine truth of theſe new tenets; and in what "they excelled the ſyſtem of religion which their forefathers "had held in ſuch veneration; and perſiſted in it, that with-"out ſuch ſatisfactory evidence and inſtruction on the ſubject, "it was unreaſonable to demand his aſſent."

OLAUS would not deign to yield to this dilatory manner of producing conviction. He was at no loſs for a reply, and had moſt powerful arguments at command. He drew his ſword, and

and laying hold of *Kindius*, ſon to *Sigurdis*, " declared in the moſt " determined manner, that he would hew the youth in pieces, if " the earl heſitated a moment longer about adopting the Chriſtian " faith: and added, that this ſhould be but an earneſt of the fate " of every one who refuſed to adopt the principles of that religion " which he had embraced.—Whereas the earl, by his compliance, " would not only enter into a more ſacred and honourable al- " liance with the crown of *Norway*; but, as the revelation was " immediately from God, would, by accepting it, ſecure a ſtate " of happineſs in the immortal world."

Any further obſtinacy would have involved *Sigurdis* and his adherents in inſtant and irremediable diſtreſs. He was prevailed on to become Chriſtian, conſented to be baptized, and to ſign a proclamation, that all his ſubjects ſhould follow his example. In conſequence of this, *Olaus* ratified a ſolemn treaty of friendſhip with him, in which it was particularly ſtipulated, that, for the more effectual eſtabliſhment of Chriſtianity, *Sigurdis* was to give honourable protection to all thoſe holy men, who might chooſe to reſide in thoſe parts for the purpoſe of inſtructing the people in the nature of the Chriſtian doctrines; and for his fidelity in fulfilling that part of the engagement, *Olaus* took *Kindius* along with him as an hoſtage. Many of the more intelligent and religious men who had come from *Norway* with *Olaus*, remained in the *Orcades* and in the north of *Scotland*, to fulfil their pious reſolution of ſpreading the light of the goſpel there. *Olaus*, with the reſt of his followers, ſailed on another expedition towards the firth of *Moray*.

The

THE armament landed to refreſh at *Eccialſbacca* (or the fort of *Burghead.)* Some colonies were detached thence under the command of an experienced leader, *Enetus*, either on a foraging party, or to make a ſettlement on the rich banks of the firth of *Dornoch*. But *Alane*, thane of *Sutherland*, and his chieftains, came down on the invaders with a numerous army, and their ſucceſs proved, that either their courage, force, or diſcipline, was ſuperior to that of their opponents; for, after an obſtinate engagement, the *Norwegian* lines gave way, and the whole detachment was drove in confuſion to their veſſels. This is ſaid to have been the laſt attempt of theſe foreigners to make ſettlements in that country. Soon after that event, *Olaus* returned to *Norway*; and *Kindius*, whom he had taken along with him, died. Thence, *Sigurdis* conſidered himſelf as freed from all his engagements with the court of *Norway*; and entered into a treaty with *Malcolm* II. 1009.

IN conſequence of the treaty, *Sigurdis* received a daughter of *Malcolm*'s in marriage, and had by her a ſon and heir named *Torphinus*, whoſe education was committed to the care of the king; and while he was yet but a youth, his father engaged in an unfortunate expedition to *Ireland*, where he fell in battle, much lamented by his countrymen. 1020.

ON the day of that battle, the famous prodigy of the *Deſtinies* is ſaid to have been ſeen in *Caithneſs*. *Daradus*, a native of the country, is reported to have ſeen twelve gigantic figures, reſembling women, ride full ſpeed into the ſide of a hill; a daring curioſity led him to the place, and looking through an opening among ſome rocks, he ſaw the ſpectres employed about a loom; and while they "wove the web of death," ſung a dreadful ſong,

ſong*, "how low the dauntleſs earl was laid." Of that ſong Mr. *Gray* has formed his beautiful Ode; which, as it repreſents the formidable manner in which the Fates announced in *Caithneſs* the fall of its celebrated earl, *Sigurdis*, may be properly referred to on this occaſion.

SECTION IV.

1030. TORPHINUS was created earl of *Caithneſs* and *Sutherland*, by a charter from *Malcolm*, and maintained his rank and authority with dignity and in peace, until the death of that monarch.

1038. By his ſucceſſor, tribute was demanded of *Torphinus*, as an acknowledgment of his dependance on the crown of *Scotland*. The earl thought, that the grant of ſuch a demand was altogether unſuitable to the ſpirit of that independant power of which he was poſſeſſed; and refuſed to court the favour of the crown of *Scotland* on any ſuch humiliating terms. In conſequence of this declaration being made known, a nobleman, whoſe name was *Moddan*, was created earl of *Caithneſs* and *Sutherland* in his ſtead.

Moddan advanced north, levying war againſt *Torphinus*, and with the ſhow of acting by royal authority, attached a number of the chieftains in *Sutherland* to his intereſts, and approached *Caithneſs* with a formidable retinue.

Torphinus, however, had been appriſed of his motions, had the frontiers of *Caithneſs* well defended by a numerous army, and

* *Bartholinus* Antiq. Danic. 617.

was

was every way well prepared to repulſe his attacks. *Moddan*, finding that he ſhould meet with ſuch a ſtout reſiſtance, after he had aſſembled his forces on the borders of *Caithneſs*, began to retreat with them through *Sutherland*. Soon as *Torphinus* was appriſed of this, he precipitated his flight into *Roſs-ſhire*, by purſuing him with a choice body of men; and, after chaſtiſing ſome of the clans, who had ſhown the greateſt tendency to revolt, returned into *Caithneſs* in quiet.

TORPHINUS, however, was not without his ſuſpicions, that *Moddan*, being a powerful nobleman, protected and encouraged by the government, would return in ſome more advantageous circumſtances, with a view to aſcertain his right to the earldom, and take poſſeſſion of *Caithneſs*. He therefore was at much pains in perfecting the diſcipline of his army, ſtrengthened his caſtles on the frontiers and promontories, and prepared a number of veſſels to oppoſe any naval force which his rival might bring againſt him.

MODDAN, in the mean time, had not been idle; he had gained over numbers to ſupport his cauſe; and marched north with a much larger force. The crown aſſiſted him in fitting out a fleet of eleven veſſels, equipped in the warlike manner of the times; one *Carl* had the command of the ſquadron; and a time was appointed for his making a deſcent on the coaſt of *Caithneſs*, when *Moddan* ſhould attempt to penetrate into it by land.

TORPHINUS heard of the fleet's advancing. His ſhips were only five in number; theſe, however, he manned with the flower of his warriors, and ſailed to intercept the enemy.

WHEN the fleets approached, the ſuperiority of the enemy's veſſels, both as to ſize and number, was evident to all: *Torphinus*

himſelf felt it: but animated his warriors by a moſt ſpirited addreſs, and ſtrengthened their bravery as they advanced to the charge. "Our valour," ſays he, "muſt ſupply the place of "numbers, and inſpire the hope of ſucceſs:—the ſenſe of ho-"nour baniſh all apprehenſion of danger. Let us ſurprize "them by the boldneſs of our attack, and they ſhall fall into "diſorder, from whence they will never recover." The event was anſwerable to his moſt ſanguine expectations.

When their fleets approached each other to battle, the line was formed abreaſt, by laſhing the ſhips with ropes ſide by ſide together. The warriors were arranged on the prows of each. Soon after the firſt flight of javelins and arrows, and the fleets were come cloſe together, *Torphinus* took the ſtandard of his own galley in his hand, and jumped with a ſhout of triumph into the admiral's ſhip; his warriors followed him with loudeſt acclamations, and, confounding the enemy, drove them from their ſtations. This daring and reſolute procedure, threw *Carl*'s whole ſquadron into confuſion; the crew of the admiral's ſhip fled for ſafety into the adjoining veſſels, and, cutting the ropes which bound the fleet together, allowed them to be ſcattered, leaving the principal ſhip in *Torphinus*'s poſſeſſion. And ſuch was the diſmay in *Carl*'s fleet, occaſioned by this event, that they did not return to the fight; but, leaving the command of the ſea, and the joy of an almoſt bloodleſs victory, to *Torphinus*, ſailed inoffenſively back along the coaſt, into the firth of *Moray*.

During the time, however, that *Torphinus* was engaged in defeating the attack meditated againſt him by ſea, *Moddan*, with his land-forces, had penetrated into the heart of *Caithneſs*; and, ere the earl was prepared to give him battle, had advanced near

to

to *Thurſo*. He had not, however, met in *Caithneſs* with any favourable reception; and not being joined by any powerful chieftain, was under the neceſſity of ſupporting his forces by depredation and plunder, and became extremely obnoxious to the inhabitants. They had cauſe to wiſh, that ſuch a race of ſpoilers might be extirpated. *Moddan*, therefore, not only found much difficulty in foraging, but could obtain no faithful accounts of the movements of *Torphinus*'s army. The earl alſo was an overmatch for him by his ſuperior knowledge of the country; he came upon him unawares; his guard were taken by ſurpriſe: *Moddan* was made a captive in the night-time, and beheaded ere the morning. The chief part of his followers and ſoldiers, when they were apprized of his fate, ſtruck with terror and conſternation, ſurrendered priſoners of war, the reſt fled to the mountains and eſcaped into *Sutherland*. *Torphinus* greatly rejoiced at this ſtroke, ſo additionally fortunate as to have given him a ſecond victory without the loſs of any of his men. The attachment which the country had ſhown to him, by keeping at the utmoſt diſtance from his rival—the evidences he had ſeen of the fidelity and intrepidity of his troops, and his firm eſtabliſhment, no leſs in the hearts of the people than in the earldom—greatly elated him. He prepared a very ſplendid and coſtly entertainment for his numerous vaſſals. It was a feaſt of triumph and honour to his principal warriors; and of luxurious carouſal to the multitude. It laſted many days.

The eminent ſucceſs of *Torphinus* in the late conteſt, his magnificent hoſpitality to the chieftains and ſoldiers, and his generoſity to all who claimed his protection, encreaſed his influ-

ence and authority; his fame and power daily gaining ground, ſoon extended over all the *Orcades*; and, for ſeveral years, he ruled uncontrouled over thoſe extenſive territories.

But the celebrated *Sigurdis* had left a grandſon, named *Ronald*, a young man of diſtinguiſhed abilities: he having gone over to *Norway*, attended at the court there, and taking part in the exploits of the princes, became remarkable for his feats of activity and valour. He was eſteemed as heir to the earldom of *Orkney*; gained the attachment of the king; and was offered by *Magnus* veſſels and arms, if he choſe to head a force and ſtrive to make good his claim.

Ronald's ambition was equal to this high encouragement: poſſeſſed of native penetration and addreſs, he exhibited the enterprize in ſuch flattering lights, that he perſuaded many young men of conſiderable influence to accompany him with their followers, and to ſeek their fortunes in the iſlands. They made a ſucceſsful deſcent in the *Orcades*, and ſoon began to enjoy the emoluments of the high rank and power which they aſſumed.

Just at this period, a nobleman, whoſe name was *Arninus*, one who had filled ſome of the firſt places next the throne in *Norway*, being accuſed of ſome faithleſs proceedings, and ſeeing a ſtorm gathering, and ready to burſt upon his head, reſolved on a voluntary but honourable exile. He ſailed with a conſiderable armament from *Norway*, and landed with great pomp in *Caithneſs*, as the friend and ally of *Torphinus*; offering to aſſiſt him in driving *Ronald* from the *Orcades*, and hoping to ſhare in the honours of that earldom.

While preparations were making in *Caithneſs* to inveſt the iſlands, an embaſſy came from *Magnus* to *Arninus*, promiſing to receive

receive him again into the royal favour, if he would join *Ronald* with his armament, and help to defend the *Orcades* from the attack meditated by *Torphinus*. But although this meſſage conſiderably cooled his zeal for the enterprize; yet the power of which he knew *Torphinus* to be poſſeſſed; the vaſt fleet, and number of forces, which he ſaw ready to be ſent forth againſt *Ronald*; determined him to preſerve a neutrality for the preſent.

TORPHINUS collected his whole naval force together, which, in great and ſmall, conſiſted of ſixty veſſels. On board of theſe, his whole army embarked, and he launched into the *Pent-land-firth*. There he was met by *Ronald*'s ſquadron, which was only thirty in number, but far ſuperior in ſize to the ſhips commanded by *Torphinus*. The fleets formed the line of battle. The ſixty veſſels belonging to *Torphinus*, all faſtened ſide by ſide together, formed a noble phalanx; but the ſuperior height of *Ronald*'s ſhips gave his warriors a vaſt advantage; the archers threw their darts with greater violence and a ſurer aim. The ſhip in which *Torphinus* commanded in perſon, was the only one of his fleet of equal ſize to the firſt rate of the enemy; ſo that he found, although the warriors in his own ſhip ſupported the fight on equal terms, yet thoſe on either hand, oppreſſed by their diſadvantageous ſituation, were ſinking under the weight of the enemy's weapons deſcending from above. He therefore gave the ſignal for a retreat, ordered the veſſels to be looſened, and retired to *Thurſo* bay. *Ronald*'s ſquadron kept their place, and preſerved the line entire.

TORPHINUS had become ſenſible, that without the aid of ſix lofty ſhips, which *Arninus* had under his command, he could not

not be on an equal footing with *Ronald*; and therefore, in the moſt ſerious manner, applied to *Arninus* to come with his ſquadron to his aid, " adjuring him, by the friendſhip and protection " which he had experienced at his hand, to ſupport him at " this critical moment; promiſing, in conſequence of their ſuc- " ceſs, to devolve upon him the government of the iſles." *Arninus*, inſpired by this hope, and flattered by the ſo honourable ſolicitation from *Torphinus*, joined him with the utmoſt alacrity. The large veſſels were manned with the moſt reſolute and experienced of their followers; a new diſpoſition of the fleet was made; and they advanced to a ſecond attack on *Ronald*'s ſquadron. *Torphinus* was reſolved that this action ſhould be deciſive. With a truly heroic ſolemnity, he left *Arnor*, his bard, on the ſhore, that there, on an eminence, an undiſturbed witneſs of the fight, he might celebrate the fortunes of the day, and immortalize his memory, whatever might be his fate *.

TORPHINUS now commanding ſhips of at leaſt an equal ſize with thoſe of *Ronald*; and knowing the very ſingular importance of the advantageous terms on which the warriors in the lofty veſſels encountered them that were arranged in thoſe of inferior ſize;

* The bards often attended the army to the field of battle, to animate the ſoldiers to valiant deeds. *Bartholinus*, in his *Cauſæ contemptæ mortis a Danis*, 178, preſerves one of the antient hymns on an occaſion of this kind.—In like manner, the *Welſh* bards attended and poured out their ſong, to inſpire their countrymen in the hour of conflict.

See Mr. PENNANT's Tour in *Wales*, p. 471.

made

made his firſt attack on that wing of the enemy's fleet, where the ſmaller veſſels were formed. They, unable to ſupport the unequal combat, gave way, and broke the line, to ſave themſelves from inſtant deſtruction. The other wing, obſerving the line broke through, and fearing leſt they ſhould be ſurrounded, began to retire; and, in a little time, *Ronald* in the center was left, with but a very few ſhips to ſupport him. He fought, however, with undaunted reſolution, and kept his ſtation till the cloſe of day; when obſerving the greateſt part of his fleet either ſhattered, diſperſed, or taken, he gave up his cauſe as loſt; and, without ſo much as touching in *Orkney*, ſailed directly for *Norway*.

TORPHINUS thus at laſt triumphed alſo over *Ronald*. But ſeems either to have dreaded the reſentment of *Magnus* king of *Norway*, or to have been moſt anxiouſly ſolicitous to know his reſolutions, in conſequence of the late event; for he tried a moſt dangerous expedient to obtain an audience and force a reconciliation with the king. Nothing but great intrepidity and bravery of mind could have been equal to the exploit. He ſailed for *Norway* with two of his fineſt galleys only: on his arrival there, he found that *Magnus* was embarked on an expedition to *Denmark* and was detained by contrary winds in a harbour of *Syſterland*. *Torphinus* came into that port, and, without any previous intimation, went aboard the royal galley; and being cloathed in a white robe, that none might interrupt him (for ſuch ſeems to have been the privilege of thoſe who were devoted to the culture of *Chriſtianity* at that period) went directly into the great cabin, where *Magnus* ſat at dinner; and as a proteſtation

teſtation and ſeal of friendſhip, eat of the bread that was before the king: *Magnus*, in return, offered his cup to the ſtranger, begging to be informed on what errand he had come, and who it was that thus accoſted him. *Torphinus* diſcovered himſelf. The earl of *Caithneſs* was not beheld without aſtoniſhment on this occaſion. With manly deference he addreſſed himſelf to the king, "begged pardon for the oppoſition he had "given to the late equipment from *Norway*. He wiſhed "well to the nation: but every principle of honour called "on him to defend his eſtate from all encroachments; but, "to teſtify his regard for *Magnus*, and zeal for his proſperity, "was ready to join the fleet, and ſecond the enterprizes of the "king."

Magnus felt equal pleaſure and admiration, at the boldneſs and magnanimity ſhown in this offer of friendſhip, and cordially accepted of the alliance and aid of ſo experienced a commander, highly ſatisfied that *Torphinus* ſhould take part in his expedition againſt the *Danes*.

But this mutual confidence was of no long continuance.

Many of thoſe who courted the favour of *Magnus*, ſaw a formidable rival in *Torphinus*. They traduced him to the king, as practiſing inſidious deſigns; and found witneſſes to declare that he never favoured any who were attached to the crown of *Norway*. He perceived the king's friendſhip fluctuate, and that ſuſpicion often darkened his brow. And, not chooſing to truſt farther to the uncertain conſequences of the jealouſy which he ſaw had begun, without any previous notice, he quitted the fleet, and, with as little ceremony as he had come, ſet ſail again

in his gallies for *Scotland:* and for ſeveral years protected his ſhores in quiet.

MAGNUS died. Soon as *Torphinus* underſtood that *Harold* had aſcended the throne of *Norway*, he renewed his offer of forming an alliance with that ſtate. His ambaſſadors met with a favourable reception, and returned with an entreaty that *Torphinus* would come over in perſon, and ſpend ſome time with *Harold*. He accordingly manned two gallies, each of twenty ſeats, and with a hundred attendants ſailed for *Norway*. *Harold* entertained him in the moſt ſplendid manner, and they ratified a league of friendſhip. From *Norway*, *Torphinus* went into *Denmark*, viſited *Suenus*, and formed terms of peace and alliance with him; and was entertained in a like flattering and honourable way.

BY theſe treaties, having the proſpect that his territories would remain quiet and ſecure; his mind having been much harraſſed by continual engagement in deſperate enterprizes; and entering into the ſpirit of religion prevalent in that age; he reſolved to go to *Rome*, and receive abſolution from the papal chair. From the *Baltic*, he took his route through *Saxony*, was countenanced by the emperor *Henry*, and received from him a ſet of horſes to facilitate his journey into *Italy*.

HAVING performed this pilgrimage, and received the wiſhed-for abſolution, he returned to *Caithneſs* full of peaceful thoughts, and was fortunate enough to ſpend the reſt of his years in tranquillity. In theſe he became no leſs eminent for eſtabliſhing ſalutary laws, and encouraging the arts of induſtry,

than he had formerly been diſtinguiſhed by military fame, and ſucceſs in the exploits of war.

He lived to an advanced age, until after *Malcolm* III. had aſcended the throne of *Scotland*.

1064. Torphinus had built a ſumptuous church in *Byrſa*, where the firſt biſhops of *Orkney* reſided. In the decline of life, he retired to that iſland, and, finiſhing his days with exemplary piety, was with much ſolemnity interred in the temple which he had raiſed. His country long lamented the loſs of ſo celebrated a ruler, who had eſtabliſhed ſecurity in it, through the influence of his laws, and had taught it to enjoy the arts and bleſſings of peace.

SECTION V.

1100. Paul and *Erland*, the ſons of *Torphinus*, through the whole of their lives amicably ſhared both in the honours and adminiſtration of their father's extenſive domain. During this period, the northern counties are ſaid to have arrived at a very ſuperior degree of cultivation and improvement, which became equally conſpicuous in the richneſs of their lands, and in the mildneſs of their diſpoſitions.

But the ſons of *Paul* and *Erland* did not equally inherit their father's virtues. *Magnus*, the ſon of *Erland*, deſtined to be canonized, was quiet, generous, ſerious, friendly, fond of retirement and of knowledge. *Hacon*, the heir of *Paul*, was vehement, wild, and impetuous in his temper, impatient of reſtraint, and could not bear to ſee a rival of his power and honour

nour in a younger brother's ſon. The ſongs which celebrated the glorious exploits of his anceſtors in war, rouſed up his ſoul to warlike enterprizes. He became dreaded for his daring piracies on the ſeas; and at home, his ferocity and ſavage conduct to his brothers, ſervants, and vaſſals, awoke formidable apprehenſions of the broils in which he would involve his country. His father endeavoured, with paternal affection and authority, to reform his manners; *Erland* made every conceſſion that could tend to pacify him; *Magnus* overlooked his inſults, and ſtrove to ingratiate himſelf into *Hacon*'s favour; but in vain. At length, however, his relations contrived to divert the wild genius of *Hacon* into an uſeful channel. They met in council, and repreſented it to him as a matter of the firſt importance to his renown, that he ſhould go abroad, ſee the manners of other countries, learn the arts of war, and the laws of government. *Hacon* acquieſced with this propoſal, equipped a galley, and ſailing over to the continent, viſited *Denmark* and *Sweden*; and long ſupported a military character among the chiefs of *Norway*, conducting the armaments of that nation.

Magnus, in the mean time, with undiſturbed devotion, indulged the worthieſt amuſements of leiſure and quiet: was indefatigable in his reſearches after knowledge, in particular that of ſacred writ; and, that he might become the more thoroughly acquainted with the nature of the evangelical doctrines, went round by ſea to *Jona*, where the light of Chriſtianity was held to be more fully diſplayed. There, and on the adjacent coaſts of *Scotland*, he was a long while converſant with the

eccleſiaſtics; and, careſſed and recommended by ſeveral biſhops, was, on his return to *Caithneſs*, received with the higheſt marks of veneration and eſteem.

MAGNUS took great concern in the eſtabliſhments for Chriſtian worſhip, and patronized the *Roman* miſſionaries. He was no leſs attentive to the culture of piety and good affections in his own breaſt, than to promote the genuine influence of every ſacred inſtitution: and while he advanced the intereſts of the church, ſhowed a generous concern in every regulation that could tend to ſecure the tranquillity and happineſs of his country. By theſe means the hearts of the people were devoted to *Magnus*; all ranks looked up to him as a patron of the juſt and good, and who promiſed to be a ruler equally reſpected and beloved.

HACON learned how highly his countrymen admired the character of *Magnus*, how much they were attached to him: and, ſtung with the reflection, meditated his deſtruction. Having all along practiſed the arts of war, in piracies and playing the freebooter among the weſtern iſles, he had conſiderable armaments perpetually under his command, and came home declaring, that he deſpiſed his brother's peaceful virtues, and was determined to aſſert his ſuperiority over *Magnus* by force of arms.

WHILE arrangements were evidently making every where for that purpoſe, the chieftains obſerved, with the deepeſt concern, what a cloud was gathering over their quiet days, and neld the moſt ſolemn meetings to diſpel the riſing ſtorm: *Hacon* was, by their mediation, prevailed upon to enter on conciliatory meaſures with *Magnus*.

It was agreed upon, that the chiefs, each attended with a certain number of ſelect friends, ſhould hold a conference, in which the ſeparate provinces and boundaries of their authority and power ſhould be ſettled, and a league of friendſhip eſtabliſhed in the moſt ſacred manner: the place appointed was the iſland of *Egliſha*.

To give additional ſolemnity to the treaty, it was to be held in *Eaſter-week*. All parties expected to celebrate, with much joy, the fortunate reſult of this approaching agreement.

Magnus, accompanied with a number of the moſt intelligent and experienced of his friends, ſailed according to appointment, with two ſhips only, and was early at the iſland, deliberating with his counſellors on the terms that were now to bring the threatened diſturbances to an end. But while they were enjoying the hopes of the laſting peace that would enſue, a numerous fleet appeared; and as they drew towards the ſhore, but little doubt remained, that *Hacon* had reſolved to put a fatal period to their conſultations.

Magnus ſaw he was betrayed; and every means of ſafety cut off but expoſtulation and prayer. To theſe he truſted his cauſe, and ordered maſs to be celebrated. *Hacon*'s fleet, full of armed men, ſoon inveſted the iſland; they landed with every hoſtile appearance, and ſurrounded the church with drawn ſwords. *Magnus*, defenceleſs and unarmed, came forth among them. He intreated *Hacon* to ſpare his life, and he would reſign the title of earl ſolely to him. It was not enough. He aſked for baniſhment, and promiſed to live a perpetual exile: but it was not permitted. He implored *Hacon* to put out his eyes, or in-

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flict whatever puniſhments he pleaſed, but not condemn him to immediate death. All intreaty was vain. *Hacon*, with horrible deliberation, ordered *Magnus* to be beheaded; indulging him only in one, his laſt requeſt—leiſure to compoſe himſelf in prayer ere the hatchet fell.

1120. By this dreadful ſtroke, *Hacon* ſpread an univerſal terror among the friends of *Magnus*. Intimidated by his daring procedures, they ſubmitted to his ſway. Seeing all their hopes in their favourite lord irrecoverably extinguiſhed, they were eaſily prevailed on to take an oath of fealty to *Hacon*; and he was acknowledged earl and ſuperior, both of the northern counties of *Scotland* and of the *Orkney* iſlands. The higheſt aim of his ambition being now accompliſhed; and finding that he ruled uncontrouled, he turned his attention to the encreaſing riches and proſperity of his country: it is ſaid he enacted ſeveral laws, whereby the freedom and privileges of the people were enlarged, and additional encouragements given to their progreſs and diligence in agriculture and in arts.

He often indulged himſelf in the antient practice of hunting, during the ſummer ſeaſon, among the mountains of *Strathnaver*. In the pariſh of *Tongue*, there is a lake ſtill called by his name: in the lake there is an iſland, where he had a hunting-houſe, of which there are remains, and the iſland is called *Illan-lochan-hacon*.

In the decline of life he became very devout and ſerious, and called to remembrance, with ſorrow, the violences he had done, and the blood-ſhed he had occaſioned in his earlier years: and, in the ſpirit of the then prevalent ſuperſtition, reſolved on a pil-

grimage to *Jeruſalem*, on purpoſe that he might waſh himſelf in the river *Jordan*, and ſhed the tears of repentance in the *holy ſepulchre*, if poſſible to ſoften the poignancy of theſe bitter recollections that haunted him. Having fulfilled his vow, he returned with a quieter mind, and a great character of ſanctity; and having brought many holy relicks along with him, theſe heightened the veneration of his countrymen for their earl: and he is much celebrated for having governed his territories, all the remainder of his life, with much clemency, equity, and wiſdom. He died ere the middle of the twelfth century, while *David* I. was king of *Scotland*.

HACON'S equitable and generous adminiſtration in the laſt years of his life, whereby he ſtrove to compenſate for his former errors, made his death to be regretted, and his memory long held in reſpect.

BUT the circumſtances in which *Magnus* was ſo untimely cut off, and the flattering proſpects that by his means ſeemed to be opening on his country, conſpired to ſecure to him a more laſting monument of fame. His death was conſidered as a martyrdom. His probity and piety, his love of truth and knowledge, the patronage he had ſo affectionately ſhown to the *Roman* miſſionaries, and the liberality wherewith he had ſupported their eſtabliſhments, made his name to be celebrated by the religious orders, with a ſacred veneration. Repreſentations were ſent to *Rome* of the great reſpect and ſo diſtinguiſhed regard which *Magnus* had ſhown to the church and catholic inſtitutions. In conſequence of theſe he was canonized: and for a number of years, many wonders were ſaid and believed to

to have been ſeen, many cures performed, at the ſhrine of *Saint Magnus*.

SEVERAL churches, erected to his memory in the north, ſtill retain his name.

SECTION VI.

1136. HACON left two ſons, by different mothers: one named *Paul* the *Silent*, the other *Harold* the *Orator*. *Harold*'s mother was daughter to a chief who had large poſſeſſions and great influence in *Caithneſs*; her brother had gained the title and authority of the count of *Thurſo*: *Harold* was therefore, by his means, ſupported as the heir of *Hacon*, in *Caithneſs*: *Paul* took poſſeſſion of the government of the *Orcades*. But they were jealous of each other's power. Their projects and intereſts interfered: animoſities and feuds prevailed between the chieftains that were attached to each; and theſe contentions were continually on the eve of breaking forth into avowed hoſtilities, and the deſperate enterprizes of declared war.

IT was therefore propoſed, by the more prudent of their friends, that they ſhould meet to ſettle their differences; and a feaſt of reconciliation was appointed to be held at *Chriſtmas*. The chiefs agreed to confirm a federal bond of union; and mutually gave public entertainments, as an open profeſſion of their friendſhip.

WHILE they were holding one of the banquets, *Harold* accidentally ſtepped into an apartment, where his mother, and an artful woman,

woman, his aunt, were buſy at their needles, and he found they had been embroidering a ſhirt of very fine linen. On enquiry, for whom ſo rich a piece of dreſs was intended, he was informed, that it was deſigned for *Paul*. *Hacon* was enraged at the thoughts of this preference. They gave indirect inſinuations that ought to have pacified him; but his reaſon was loſt in the tumult of paſſion, and he tore it from them:—they called heaven to witneſs, that it would be death to the wearer; but he, with fatal reſentment, declared, that none ſhould wear it but himſelf; and, notwithſtanding his mother's moſt earneſt entreaty and tears, carried it away. The ſhirt was deeply poiſoned, and *Hacon* fell a victim to the raſh indulgence of his inconſiderate pride and vanity; leaving *Paul*, for whom it had been deſigned, ſole ſovereign of the country.

FRAQUARK, and the mother of *Harold*, overwhelmed with vexation and ſorrow, and alarmed with apprehenſions what the conſequences of this fatal event might be, fled into the heart of *Sutherland*, and took up their reſidence in a ſequeſtered caſtle, to wait the iſſues of fortune *. 1155.

PAUL now concerted meaſures for the more effectually eſtabliſhing his influence and authority over *Caithneſs*: he found,

* By *Torfæus*'s account of this aſylum, it was an edifice built in an extremely wild ſituation. He mentions that it was placed on a rock, the acceſs to it by dreary and gloomy paths, amidſt crags, and fens, and foreſts. In the XIIIth. Letter there is mention made of circular towers, the only kind of caſtles of which there are remains in theſe parts, and their ſituation correſponds with the above: perhaps this may have been among the laſt times that any of theſe were inhabited; and it is now, ſince that period, betwixt ſix and ſeven hundred years.

however, that it muſt be done by force of arms; and made warlike preparations for that purpoſe. But his military talents were called forth to be exerciſed in another channel. A ſtorm was gathering, that threatened the total overthrow of all his power.

A DESCENDANT of *Saint Magnus*, appeared at the court of *Norway*. This young man's name was *Ronald*, no leſs diſtinguiſhed by the elegance of his form, than by the extenſive capacity of his ſoul, and engaging manners; he conciliated the attachment of the princes, and was a favourite with the king. His ſtrength and activity were no leſs remarkable, than his knowledge and experience of all the arts and ſciences which were in vogue. A poem is preſerved, in which nine of his excellencies are particularly celebrated;—how well he could read; underſtood the *Runic* characters; played at cheſs; was a muſician; compoſed extemporary poems; he excelled in archery; could dexterouſly manage the oar; ſkate with wooden ſhoes upon the ſnow; and work in wood and iron. By theſe accompliſhments, he not only gained the civic wreath, but offered fair for military fame. As heir to *Saint Magnus*, he was nominated an earl by the king, and bid to ſeek the poſſeſſion of his hereditary fortune. He received a preſent of a royal galley, well manned and equipped. Several commanders, of conſiderable influence, encouraged his aſpiring views: many adventurers were eager to join the armament; and he ſoon found himſelf commander of a fleet of ſix veſſels full of warriors, and of ſix others as tenders or victualling ſhips.

ERE

ERE *Ronald* advanced with this armament, he ſent meſſengers to *Paul*, offering to ſhare the government of the iſlands in a friendly manner with him: but *Paul* treated the meſſengers with great haughtineſs and contempt. *Ronald* had apprehended this; and, in conſequence of ſuch an event, inſtructed his emiſſaries to go into *Caithneſs*, and there publiſh his authority, and his claim as the heir of *Magnus*, and to announce that he was coming over to reward all thoſe who were found inſpired with reſpect for the memory of that great MARTYR.

FRAQUARK and the mother of *Harold* had formed, by this time, very important connections in the weſt of *Scotland*. They were fortunate enough, in that *Madanus*, earl of *Athol*, had married their niece, a daughter of the celebrated *Hacon*'s. By this connection, *Madanus* had a ſon, whom he wiſhed to advance to power and fortune in the north. The preſent was eſteemed a favourable opportunity of forwarding their deſign. They careſſed *Ronald*'s embaſſadors, and promiſed to be in force to ſupport him, providing that the youth, whoſe name was *Harold*, ſhould come under his tuition, and when of age, ſhare with *Ronald* in the government of the northern counties.

ON the return of the meſſengers to *Norway*, *Ronald*, greatly encouraged by the proſpect of the ſuccours which that confederacy would procure him, inſpired his followers with the higheſt expectations of ſucceſs: and, to add religious dignity to the enterprize, called many of the chiefs together, and in their preſence made a ſolemn vow, "that if they proſpered, he "would build a magnificent church, and dedicate it to *Saint* "*Magnus*." On his protection he reſted their cauſe, and doubt-

ed " not of the moſt fortunate iſſue to crown their expedition, " undertaken with ſuch laudable and pious views." The commanders and ſailors teſtified their approbation of the voyage, by repeated acclamations; every one was ſatisfied with the undertaking; and, full of hope, the fleet ſet ſail.

Paul, in the mean time, had ſtrengthened his fortreſſes and caſtles, and made every warlike preparation for the defence and ſecurity of his coaſts. He had been particularly attentive to meaſures for giving the fulleſt effect to the antient cuſtom of communicating intelligence of the appearance of an enemy, from mountain to mountain, and from iſland to iſland, by fires. Knowing their importance, his inſtructions, with reſpect to theſe, had been enforced with particular care. *Ronald* had learned this, or at leaſt his penetration ſuggeſted it; and it occurred to him, as a matter of very eſſential moment, if he could perplex *Paul* by thoſe very means wherewith he ſo judiciouſly conſulted his ſafety. He therefore, ere the fleet came in ſight of land, publiſhed an offer of large premiums, to any who would undertake to defeat the effect of that alarm and ſignal to arms which was given by the fires.

An old inhabitant of *Orkney*, an experienced ſeaman, offered his ſervice. He begged of *Ronald* to land, with the large ſhips at *Zetland*, and refreſh his forces there, while he, with the lighter veſſels, would give a falſe alarm to the *Orcades*. This was agreed to: the gallies were rowed within ſight of the *Orkney* iſlands at day-break: there, for ſome time, they lay upon their oars. By and by they raiſed the ſails of the veſſels a little, to ſuggeſt the idea of approach: gradually through the day

day they continued this deception, and gave the appearance of loftier veſſels drawing nigh: ere evening, by the time the ſails were hoiſted to the maſt-head, they ſeemed a very formidable fleet: and this appearance, aided by the apprehenſions of the iſlanders, made the ſtratagem take its full and deſired effect. The fires were kindled.

On the appointed alarm being given, the chieftains aſſembled; all ranks flocked together to defend their country from invaſion.

Next day, to their aſtoniſhment, no fleet appeared. Every one having left his domeſtic concerns, and got under arms, zealous to defend his inheritance, was fluſhed with the hope of making the invaders dearly pay for ſuch an encroachment on their peace: but, when no enemy was to be found, they remained in the moſt painful ſtate of ſuſpenſe and conſternation. They ſaw, that by ſome fatal error, they had been impoſed on, and their watchmen deceived. They were diſconcerted, mutinied, and hardly without bloodſhed, returned every man to his home.

Another expedient proved equally favourable to *Ronald*'s cauſe. A ſingle boat's crew was ſent from *Zetland* to *Fara*, the neareſt of the *Orkney* iſlands. They pretended to have been drove from their houſes by the adventurers from *Norway*, and had come to ſeek for ſhelter and a ſettlement among the inhabitants of *Orkney*, and to warn them of their danger. They ſo far ingratiated themſelves with the people of *Fara*, by their readineſs in executing every office in which they could be ſerviceable, that there remained no ſuſpicion that they could have come

come with a fraudulent deſign. Yet, at every dark and quiet hour, theſe artful emiſſaries ſo thoroughly drenched the piles of wood with water, which were intended to be kindled as the ſignal of an approaching enemy, that when *Ronald*'s ſquadron in reality appeared, no art could make them burn; nor could they in time collect to the mountain-tops a ſufficient quantity of fuel to give the appointed alarm.

By theſe prudent and artful meaſures *Ronald* gained, without any material oppoſition, a full poſſeſſion of many of the iſles, and ſoon, in point of influence and power among them, was on an equal footing with *Paul*, whom he from time to time amuſed with various propoſals of peace. By the mediation of a biſhop, a ſuſpenſion of arms was agreed on between them, to continue fourteen days. That quiet became finally fatal to *Paul*.

Suenus, a man of daring ſpirit and of great ſagacity, who had a number of warlike followers in *Caithneſs*, and reſided in *Freſwick* caſtle, engaged with *Madanus* and *Fraquark*, that he would bring *Paul* to them a captive. This, if accompliſhed, was the moſt certain means of fulfilling all their wiſhes: they therefore gave him the ampleſt encouragements to be ſteady in the enterprize.

Suenus ſailed in a galley, with thirty choſen men, and came to the iſland of *Rauſa*, where *Paul* was reſiding. When he came near the coaſt, he concealed the greateſt part of his men; and acquainted the fiſhing-boats which he met with, that, having proviſions to diſpoſe of, he was deſirous of knowing where the earl might be found, who, he was convinced, would be well

ſatisfied to be the purchaſer. In the courſe of theſe enquiries, he found that the earl was hunting ſeals *, in the vaſt caves that lie under the great promontory at the end of the iſland.

THIS was too favourable an opportunity of carrying his ſcheme into execution, to be neglected by *Suenus:* he landed his men upon the adjacent ſhore, ſo as to cut off the earl's retreat from the caves; and with a reſolute party fell at once upon his attendants, and cut the moſt of them to pieces. *Paul* thus ſurprized, at a period when he was altogether unſuſpicious of danger, and left utterly defenceleſs, and at a diſtance from every poſſible ſuccour, was compelled to yield to his ſevere deſtiny: he was bound, and put aboard of *Suenus*'s galley, and by him carried a priſoner into *Sutherland.* There, kept in cloſe confinement, and under perpetual apprehenſion of death, he found the only means of warding off the impending ſtroke, was to make over to young *Harold* his title to the earldom: he therefore formally reſigned to him every right and claim to fortune or authority in the north.

HAROLD being thus appointed the legal heir of *Paul,* in conſequence of that earl's diſpoſition in his favour, ſuperadded to the former terms of agreement with *Ronald,* his right to rule was judged equally valid, and that therefore his authority ſhould be equally extenſive. To this *Ronald* had no objection.

* See Mr. PENNANT's account of the manner of hunting and killing them, Tour 1769, p. 183. and *Br.* Zool. I. N° 37.

HAROLD

HAROLD went over to *Orkney*, under the care of *John* biſhop of *Athol*, and agreed with *Ronald*, that a ſolemn league of friendſhip, alliance, and perpetual amity ſhould be eſtabliſhed between them. Of this public notice was given throughout the *Orcades* and *Caithneſs*: the chieftains were appointed to aſſemble at the caſtle of *Thurſo*. There a bond of union was ratified, correſponding with the agreement of the earls; and it was declared, "that *Ronald* and *Harold* ſhould be joint partners in the "government of all theſe territories, and entitled to all the "authority and lands, of which their grandfathers *Hacon* and "*Saint Magnus* had been heirs."

THESE earls, in an amicable manner, long ruled the north with honour and tranquillity.

1158. IT was cuſtomary for them to ſpend part of the ſummer in hunting wild goats and roes among the mountains of *Strathnaver*. *Ronald* was there aſſaſſinated by *Thiorbiornus*, a chieftain who had thought himſelf inſulted. The higheſt funeral honours were paid to *Ronald*. He was carried in pomp from *Thurſo* to the temple of the *holy virgin* in *South-Ronaldſha*, and buried there.

HAROLD now fully poſſeſſed the unrivalled ſovereignty of the north, and lived long to enjoy it. We find, that in 1196, he was able to bring ſeven thouſand men to the field, and a body of cavalry, againſt the army of *William* king of *Scotland*; but was immediately defeated. In the next year, the *Caithneſians* rebelled again, headed by one *Roderic*, and *Torphinus*, ſon to *Harold*. The king met and defeated them near *Inverneſs*. *Roderic* was ſlain; and *William*, ſeizing on *Harold* in the extremity of *Caithneſs*,

detained him till *Torphinus* ſurrendered himſelf as a hoſtage; but, on ſome new treaſons of the father, the king, according to the barbarity of the times, cauſed the eyes of the unhappy youth to be put out; and had him emaſculated, of which he ſoon periſhed in priſon *.

HAROLD died in the ſeventy-third year of his age; and with him ended, in its earls, the independent ſovereignty of the north of *Scotland*. 1206.

CONCLUSION.

HAVING thus run over the principal events recorded by *Torfæus*, they are found extending through a period of four hundred years, from the beginning of the ninth to the end of the twelfth century: and ſerve to give a ſummary view of the ſtate of theſe provinces, the condition of the inhabitants, and the various fortunes of ſome of the principal characters, in theſe diſtant ages. Previous to the year eight hundred, nothing ſeems to be known of what paſſed in this country. But it is more remarkable, that ſo little ſatisfactory can be gleaned of its hiſtory ſince the year one thouſand two hundred. Soon as the light from *Torfæus* fails, we are preſented with a great blank in the northern ſtory. Darkneſs and oblivion, in a great meaſure, prevail. The court of *Norway* being no longer intereſted in the revolutions of the earldom, after it became annexed to

* Annals of *Scotl.* I. 135.

the crown of *Scotland*, the appointment of hiſtoriographers in *Flota* would ceaſe: and whatever civil commotions might ſhake theſe northern counties, the internal convulſions of ſuch diſtant provinces, howſoever ſevere, would be but little felt at the ſeat of government, and, conſequently, overlooked in the records of the nation. Nothing but fragments of diſtreſsful and gloomy events, can be learned of the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries. In theſe, frequent feud and rapine ſeem to have laid waſte the borders of *Strathnaver*, *Caithneſs*, and *Sutherland*. Some depredations and conflicts, that happened in the ſixteenth century, are related with greater preciſion. Perhaps it may not be improper, that ſome of theſe, though unimportant, ſhould be mentioned.

The following anecdotes are ſupported by the additional evidence of a ſmall volume, written in the reign of *James* VI. and may be called, as it is,

CONFLICTS OF THE CLANS.

1517. Y. Roy-M'Kay was a celebrated chieftain of *Strathnaver*. This clan made frequent depredations on the borders of *Caithneſs* and *Sutherland*. A very formidable body of them, joined by numbers from *Aſſint*, and by a troop from the wild and mountainous regions of *Edrachills*, took an opportunity of invading *Sutherland*, when the earl was at *Edinburgh*, attending on *James* V. The chieftains of *Sutherland*, however, aſſembled their vaſſals, and gathering together their whole force, fell upon the invaders at *Torrandow*, in the pariſh of *Rogart*, and put them

them to flight: two hundred and ſixteen of the *Strathnaver* party fell in the field, the reſt eſcaped to their mountains. Eighteen of the *Sutherland* men were ſlain in the fight.

YEAR after year, in like manner, theſe highland freebooters hovered on the borders, often ſpoiling the country.

QUEEN MARY came to *Inverneſs*, and iſſued an order, ſum- 1555.
moning an *Y. Roy-M'Kay* to appear before her, that he might anſwer for diſturbances and bloodſhed, which he had cauſed, by heading theſe outlaws in their depredations on *Sutherland:* but he refuſed to obey the royal mandate, and ſtrengthened himſelf in the caſtle of *Boorve*, a fortreſs placed on a peninſulated and almoſt inacceſſible rock on the north coaſt of *Strathnaver*. The earl of *Sutherland* was therefore commiſſioned to penetrate north with a conſiderable force, and with poſitive orders to apprehend *Y. Roy*, and bring him captive to the queen. The earl ſucceſsfully executed the office committed to his charge. Advancing through a tract of almoſt deſert mountains, he beſieged the caſtle of *Boorve*, and compelled it to a ſurrender. The fort was demoliſhed, and *Y. Roy* carried a priſoner to *Edinburgh* caſtle, and there held in cloſe confinement.

THE clan, in revenge for this diſhonour done to their chief, came down with redoubled rage and violence, and laid waſte the country of *Sutherland* wherever they came. They ſet fire to the chapel of *St. Ninian* in *Naviſdale*, and conſumed it to the ground, thereby alſo deſtroying a large quantity of goods, which the neighbouring inhabitants had conveyed into it, as the place of greateſt ſafety. The plunderers, however, were intercepted

in their return home, at the foot of the mountain *Bin-moir*, in *Berridale*, by a large force that had been collected on purpoſe in *Sutherland*, and above one hundred and twenty of the *Strathnaver* men were cut to pieces, beſide ſome others who were drowned in endeavouring to eſcape through the river *Garwarie*.

1585. THROUGH the rapacity of the *Clan-Gun*, great diſturbances were occaſioned in *Caithneſs* and *Sutherland*. The earls, therefore, joined in the reſolution of chaſtiſing them with the utmoſt ſeverity. *Henry Sinclair*, couſin to the earl of *Caithneſs*, was unfortunate enough to lead a band of men againſt the *Clan*, while they were ſtrongly poſted on the hill of *Bingrime*. The conſequence of his too adventurous aſſault was, that *Henry*, and one hundred and twenty of his company, were maſſacred, and the remainder, with extreme difficulty, made their eſcape. The earl of *Sutherland*'s party, however, being of ſuperior force, purſued the *Clan-Gun* into the heights of *Roſsſhire*, near to *Loch-broom*, where they made a ſtand; but, after an obſtinate fight, were routed, and their captain or chief made priſoner, who was carried captive to *Dunrobin* caſtle. Upwards of thirty men were ſlain in the combat.

1587. DISSENTION aroſe between the earls of *Caithneſs* and *Sutherland*, occaſioned by the mutual inſults given to each other by the chieftains on the borders of their lands.

ALEXANDER, earl of *Sutherland*, with a large body of men, came to chaſtiſe the offenders in *Caithneſs*, and went on pillaging to the town of *Wick*, which he ſet on fire. The earl of *Caithneſs*, with the chief of his followers, took refuge in *Gaernigo* caſtle,

caſtle, and were twelve days blocked up in it, by the invaders. But *Alexander*, perceiving that he could not compel the caſtle to a ſurrender, raiſed the ſiege, and, after plundering the country, returned into *Sutherland* with the ſpoil.

THE earl of *Caithneſs* was prepared to make repriſals on *Sutherland:* he entered it at the head of ſeveral hundred men; and, without moleſtation, ſeized a conſiderable prey of cattle, &c.; his return into *Caithneſs* was haſtened by a rumour, that a company from *Strathnaver* was ſpoiling the environs of *Thurſo:* and he was attacked in his retreat by ſome forces which had aſſembled for the purpoſe of reſcuing the prey; but they were beat off: about thirty men fell in the ſkirmiſh. 1590.

THE following year, by the mediation of the earl of *Huntly*, a formal engagement of peace and friendſhip was entered on and ratified between the earls of the contending counties. And it does not appear, that any conflict or feud of conſequence has taken place ſince that period, either in *Strathnaver*, *Caithneſs*, or *Sutherland*. Even the remembrance of ſuch having ever exiſted, is happily now but very faintly and imperfectly retained. 1591.

ITINERARY.

ITINERARY.

	Miles.
BANFF to Forglen —	7
Rothiemay —	7
Huntly —	7
Gartly Caſtle —	5
Hill of Noth —	2
Rynie —	2
Achindore —	2
Kildrumy Caſtle	5
Kirk of Towie —	3
Glenkindie —	2
Edenglaſſa —	8
Ingie Bridge —	9
Monalterie —	8
Invercauld —	6
Mar-lodge —	6
Balmoral —	11
Abergeldie —	3
Glengarn —	4
Craigs of Boliter	1
Pannanach Wells	2
Inn of Tulloch —	1
Kildrumy Caſtle	14
Dunadeer Caſtle —	12
Oldmeldrum —	12
Ellon —	8
Slains Caſtle —	12
Boddom Caſtle	4
Peterhead —	3
Inverugie Caſtle —	3
Abbey of Deer —	9
Carns of Memſie	12
Dundarg Caſtle —	7
Troup-head —	7
Wallace Tower	6
Houſe of Boyne —	12
Portſoy —	2
Findlater Caſtle	4
Cullen —	2
Gordon Caſtle —	12
Elgin —	8
Burgh-head —	6
Findhorn —	6
Kinloſs Abbey —	2
Forres —	2
Nairn —	11

ITINERARY.

	Miles.		Miles.
Inverneſs — —	15	Thurſo — —	10
Beauly — —	11	Braal Caſtle — —	6
Dingwal — —	9	Dilred Caſtle — —	6
Invergordon — —	15	Scotſcalder — —	6
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ERRATA.

Page	5,	line	1,	*for* portraits, *read*	prints.
	6,		8,	Ava,	Alvah.
	9,		7,		
	25,		19,	*after* grove *place a* :	
	31,		2,	*for* Bana, *read*	Barra.
	36,		21,	Pſoddom,	Boddom.
	39,		13,	two thouſand,	two hundred.
	46,	in the head-line, and line	24,	*for* Monnan,	Morman.
	48,		5,	chiet,	chief.
	78,		22,	hundred fathom,	hundred yards.
	82,		12,	Guernigo,	Gaernigo.
	D°,		20,	barrenneſs,	bareneſs.
	106,		1,	*after* extent *place a* :	
	106,		16,	*for* its parts, *read*	their parts.
	151,		22,	Syſterland,	Lyſterland.